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Russian-Ukrainian Talks on START I Viewed

PM1703142793 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 3

[Article by Nikolay Musiyenko: "Shreds Instead of Nuclear 'Umbrella'"]

[Text] The deal in Belovezhskaya Forest between the three presidents "elected by all the people" who trampled on Soviet people's desire to live in a single family continues to reverberate in various disputes between what only recently were union republics. Or to be more precise between the regimes which have come to rule there. Disputes about "who is eating whose food" and the division of common property are, according to the calculations of the "sovereign" rulers, designed to set fraternal peoples against each other forever. A principle as old as the world: Divide and rule.

The Soviet Armed Forces were a particular threat to the "putschists." That is why they began first of all to separate them into national compartments. The shameful row over the Black Sea Fleet can be heard by everyone. Now it is the turn of the main guarantor of our security—the troops equipped with nuclear weapons.

It is a fact that the latest round of talks between the Russian and Ukrainian delegations on settling questions connected with the implementation of the START I Treaty and with ensuring the nuclear and ecological safety of the strategic nuclear forces on Ukrainian territory was futile. Scarcely had the participants in the dialogue parted before a quite sharp statement came from Kiev, from the head of the Ukrainian delegation, Yuriy Kostenko, Ukrainian minister of environmental conservation, who accused the Russian partners of all kinds of sins. In particular of the fact that they allegedly want to compel Ukraine to recognize the strategic nuclear forces deployed on its territory as Russian.

In addition Kiev, regarding the nuclear components of weapons in Ukraine as its own property, fears that Moscow may "swindle" it. That is why the Russian delegation's proposal to withdraw to Russian Federation central bases close to factories [predzavodskiye bazy] the nosecones of ICBM's and their warheads and also long-range cruise missile nuclear munitions with a view to their subsequent dismantling.

The Russian side's haste is entirely understandable—the Russian Federation Government is anxious to fulfill the order of its favorite "uncle across the ocean" as rapidly as possible and not only to disarm unilaterally itself but also to push its "uppity" little neighbor in the same direction. After all, as long as Ukraine does not ratify the START I Treaty it is pointless for Russia to start thinking about the START II Treaty which the president is pushing through. By its obstinacy Kiev is essentially saving Russia from wholesale disarmament.

Meanwhile Ukraine for its part is displaying circumspection, is trying to elicit as many dollars as possible so it is in no hurry to put itself in the wake of the ship with the tricolor flag although it has repeatedly assured the world public that its dream is to have the status of a nonnuclear power. It is true that the geopolitical nuclear balance here will definitively collapse.

Incidentally, the United States' NATO allies are in no hurry at all to become nuclear-free. Against this background the desire of the rulers of Russia and Ukraine, crying "mine! Mine!" to tear their common nuclear "umbrella" into pitiful shreds only plays into the hand of our Western "friends"—then there will be nothing to prevent them from dictating their will to both republics.

In "Igor's Lay" the anonymous author warned of the pernicious consequences for Rus to which disputes between the dukes would lead. But as we can see history is teaching us nothing...

'Military Observer' on Problems With START

MK1603131493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 2

[Article by military observer Vadim Solovyev under "Carte Blanche" rubric: "START II: View From Russian Defense Ministry. Fears of the Military and the Treaty's Critics Do Not Coincide"]

[Text] The first treaty on reducing strategic offensive weapons (START I) took Soviet and U.S. specialists over nine years to prepare. Its signing took place a few days before the events of August 1991. On the Soviet side political considerations concerning the soonest possible clinching of the START I Treaty prevailed over military and technical considerations, and the presidents' signatures legalized a certain distortion of the balance in the United States' favor.

START II was prepared more quickly. In February 1992 the Russian and U.S. presidents defined a concept, in June they defined general criteria, and six months later they signed it. The Russian military was totally satisfied with the results of the treaty (in particular, it had been possible to eliminate START I's distortions). However, people are criticizing the military, accusing them of undermining Russia's defense capability; of favoring an economically detrimental treaty; and of being hasty, in that Russia's military doctrine has not been confirmed, and so on.

Russian military specialists do not believe this; on the contrary, they believe that START II is more advantageous to Russia, in that the United States is reducing nuclear weapons more. The U.S. potential for delivering a first strike is reduced fourfold through the elimination of the warheads of high-accuracy MX and Minuteman-3 missiles and of one-half of the warheads of Trident-2 sea-launched missiles. The sides have pledged to reduce the number of nuclear warheads by two-thirds to a level of 3,000 to 3,5000 within this treaty's 10-year implementation period—before 1 January 2003.

The following question is possible: Given such a vague level of reduction, will one of the sides not be tempted to create and exploit a numerical advantage of 500 warheads? According to the assessment of Major General Dmitriy Kharchenko, leader of the Ministry of Defense International Treaty Directorate, this is immaterial. The possession of nuclear warheads at a level of 3,000 makes it possible to destroy everything on Earth several times over, if not the planet itself. The figure of 3,000 to 3,500 nuclear warheads was prescribed for purely political reasons, simply to ensure that a state's every subsequent move can be seen.

Incidentally, this is not the START II Treaty's only "vague criterion." A strictly fixed threshold was prescribed only for nuclear warheads that are deployed on submarines—no more than 1,750 units. By deducting this prescribed number of warheads on submarines from the total level of 3,000 to 3,500 nuclear warheads, each country can determine how many and which warheads it can have in ground-based ICBM's and heavy bombers. The treaty makes it possible to carry out a structural distribution of nuclear warheads according to armed services—they will be considered and determined. Optimal variants will be chosen for all three components of the nuclear triad.

Opponents of the agreement on strategic offensive weapons will not be able to refrain from making accusations that Russia is being deprived of powerful types of strategic weapons: heavy missiles and MIRV'ed missiles. But in actual fact this is no bad thing—quite the reverse. The point is that these missiles were produced on Ukrainian territory, and those put on alert status will have ended their guaranteed service life exactly by 2003, when, under the treaty, all of them will have to be destroyed. But to set up such plants in Russia would entail the most enormous expenditure. Furthermore, this type of missile is not the last word in technology. The treaty permits the 90 launchers no longer needed for these missiles to be converted to deploy missiles carrying one warhead and which are produced on Russian territory (this is also economic expediency, incidentally).

There is another fear. Russia and the United States, although they are leaders of the nuclear club, are not its only members; besides them there is Britain, France, and China. Russian military specialists consider this factor to be immaterial, however, in that these three countries will be able to have no more than 1,700 nuclear warheads by 2000. At least partly under the influence of START II, however, nuclear development programs are also being curtailed there, and it is to be expected that their combat potential will remain at the present level (1,000 nuclear warheads). A further nuclear arms reduction (after START II) should certainly affect all five states.

Another trump held by the treaty's opponents is that Russia has not yet adopted a military doctrine but is already setting about reducing its most powerful weapons. Is this not contrary to its national interests? The Russian military has no doubts here. It is obvious that the military doctrine will be of an exclusively defensive nature—Russia has no enemies and is making no claims against other countries. Furthermore, the weapons that are to remain under the treaty are quite adequate to fulfill a nuclear deterrent role, and are even more than adequate. The Russian military, Kharchenko reassures us, have not calculated this just once. Doubts that Russia will not be able to carry out the destruction of weapons within the deadlines set by the treaty are also groundless. "We are capable of converting, disarming, and eliminating weapons under norms exceeding the prescribed level. How rapidly this can be done is another question. Many countries have an interest in ensuring that we reach these levels considerably earlier. Help is being offered and talks are going on, but there are no final solutions as yet. There are talks with France on the delivery of special equipment, mainly containers for transporting nuclear warheads. There are talks with the United States on creating the technologies and production capacities to process weapons-grade plutonium. In short, questions about help being offered and Russia's chances of autonomously meeting its destruction commitments are in no way connected," Maj. Gen. Kharchenko asserts.

The military's fears are of a different kind. One of the snags is the 1972 ABM Treaty. If the U.S. side takes it into its head to push through the "star wars" program known as SDI that was announced in the old days, it will come into conflict with the ABM Treaty and then Russia will be forced to freeze START II. However, there are currently no grounds for considering such a variant, because the Pentagon is not going beyond the ABM Treaty's framework. But to make absolutely sure, talks and the signing of the necessary agreements are needed. There are also other problems which should likewise be solved at the negotiating table.

Another difficulty in implementing the START treaties is associated with Kiev's "nuclear maneuvers." Having declared the strategic nuclear weapons on its territory its property, Ukraine would like to make a profit out of processing nuclear warheads into fuel for nuclear electric power stations. President Boris Yeltsin is not objecting to the question's being formulated in this way, but first of all he proposes to calculate how much the construction of such as plant will cost (there is still not one of them on Russian territory) and what sort of profit there will ultimately be—with a plus or a minus sign. Meanwhile the nuclear weapons on Ukrainian territory, defined by the Lisbon Protocol as Russian, are falling into neglect.

Baltic States Continue Meeting in Helsinki

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Comments

WS1703140593 Tallinn BNS in English 1047 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Helsinki, Mar 17, BNS—The Baltic countries need to take steps to avoid unnecessary military in the region, said Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys.

In his opening statement to the Council of the Baltic Sea States Tuesday [16 March], Gylys said that demilitarization around the Baltic Sea would increase political stability and security and would inspire partners for long-term cooperation.

Gylys also praised the council for its initial successes and for its ability to avoid open disagreements. The council unites 10 countries, including the Baltic States and Russia, from around the Baltic Sea.

Gylys noted that essential changes have taken place in Lithuania over the past few months—the Constitution, the presidential election, the Constitutional Court and a new democratically elected parliament.

"The present Lithuanian government emphasizes its irreversible course towards democracy [by] continuing more open relations with the West and also negotiating political and economic ties with eastern countries," he said. "At the same time [it is] trying to establish a market economy."

Human Rights Officer Established

LD1703144593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1131 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Excerpts] Helsinki, 17 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The second session of the Council of Baltic Sea States in the Finnish capital ended with the adoption of a final document—a communique of the Council. Matters relating to the further development and deepening of regional cooperation were discussed at the session. [passage omitted]

The Council approved in principle the idea of establishing the post of commisioner for human rights and ethnic minority issues. It instructed the committee of senior officials and the working group for the assistance of democratic institutions, cooperating with the appropriate bodies of the CSCE, to continue to work on this issue with a view to drawing up the specific mandate of the Council of Baltic Sea States commissioner being attentive to the need to avoid duplication of other activity in this sphere. [passage omitted]

The communique stresses that the Council noted the efforts to assist the Russian troops being withdrawn from Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia including the social and housing provision of the personnel and members of their families being withdrawn. [passage omitted]

The next session of the Council of Baltic Sea States will take place in Tallinn at the invitation of the Government of Estonia in March 1994.

Others Address Council

WS1803075593 Tallinn ETA NEWS BULLETIN in English 1136 GMT 17 Mar 93

[From 17 March PAEVALEHT, p.1]

[Text] Wednesday, March 17—The cooperation body of ten states surrounding the Baltic Sea called the Baltic Sea Council unanimously elected Estonia to be the leading state of the council for a year. Foreign Ministers of the Baltic Sea Council opened their annual meeting in Helsinki on Tuesday [16 March]. The Baltic states again hinted on the long stay of the Russian army on their territories and Russia again spoke on the violation of human right in Estonia and Latvia.

Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev demanded establishment of a chief commissar of human rights at the council, threatening with standing up against Estonia being elected as the leading country of the council. The issue of creating a post for the chief commissar will be discussed this morning, but most of the states do not stand by the idea.

According to Estonian Foreign Minister Trivimi Velliste, it would not be reasonable to establish a post like that as it would duplicate the work of CESC respective post while the mandate, rights and obligations of such a commissar would be most unclear as well as the source of financing it. His Latvian and Finnish counterparts Andreyev and Vayrynen supported Velliste's opinion.

In his speech Velliste said that the latest developments in Russia prove a most unstable situation, noting that the Baltic Sea Council could have an important role in guaranteeing political and economic stability of the region. Velliste also stressed the necessity of economic, technical and environment cooperation as well as in stopping narcotics business and illegal migration.

The Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys said that the council should consider how to avoid unnecessary military concentration in the Baltic Sea region. The Latvian Foreign Minister Andreyev announced that Latvia would be ready to organise a conference for the young MPs of the Baltic states in spring 1994.

Further on Meeting

OW1703135793 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1151 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Council of Baltic States have unanimously elected Estonia to chair the Council throughout this year.

The second session of the regional forum, uniting nine Baltic countries, opened in Helsinki on Tuesday.

Foreign ministers of the Baltic Council member states emphasized Russia's ongoing unlawful military presence on the territory of these states. Meantime, the report presented at the Council session by Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, which was delivered by one of the members of Russia's delegation at the Council, contained Russia's concern over the plight of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia and Latvia. Andrey Kozyrev's report proposed that the office of a commissioner for human rights issues and protection of national minorities be set in the framework of the Council.

The issue on the institution of the commissioner's office will be addressed at the Council Wednesday session, while, it appears, most of the Baltic Council members states are not supportive of this proposal.

In the opinion of the Estonian foreign minister, Trivimi Velliste, it would not be advisable to set up such an office, so long as it would duplicating the activities of the CSCE commissioner. The heads of Latvian and Finnish foreign ministries supported Mr. Velliste's stance.

The Baltic State Council was set up in March, 1992, on the initiative of Denmark and Germany to include Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and Russia.

Commissar for Minorities Discussed

OW1803013193 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Numerous questions about introducing a position of a commissar on human and national minority rights were asked at a news conference in Helsinki Wednesday [17 March] on the outcome of the Baltic Council foreign minister meeting.

In the final communique the word "national" as a definition of minorities was left out. As Paavo Vayrynen, Finnish Foreign Minister, explained there was no consensus of opinion on the need to introduce this position.

Trivimi Velliste, his Estonian counterpart, said that at the moment "there is no clear idea what his (the commissar's) terms of reference" could be. He insisted that no crisis "existed in this field" in the three former Soviet Baltic states.

Georg Andreyev, Latvian Foreign Minister, made it clear that Riga did not regard this issue as top priority but did not object to mentioning this institution in the communique once a "compromise" was made on its definition.

According to Andreyev, the native population in Latvia accounts for less than 50 percent of the total while in the seven largest cities of the country Russian speaking population made a majority. The minister is convinced that it is rather up to Russia where there is no Latvian TV program, newspaper or school to tackle the problem of Latvian minorities.

Povilas Gylys, Lithuanian Foreign Minister, said that his country had agreed to the institutionalizing the position of such a commissar but, like the two other former Soviet republics, had reservations about the need to have it.

The Russian delegation members who Baltfax talked to think that the approval by the Council in principle of the idea to have a commissar on human and national minority rights was an important step. One of the Russian diplomats explained that in the Russian text of the communique the word "national" was not left out but the English text was "more important." The Baltic Council has instructed a committee of senior officials and a working group on aiding democratic institution to continue exploration of this subject in cooperation with appropriate CSCE agencies "with a view to working out a specific mandate for the Baltic Council commissar and bearing in mind the need to avoid other activities in this field." The next meeting of Baltic foreign ministers will be held in Tallinn in one year from now.

Council Adopts Final Document

LD1703202493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1723 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Aleksandr Surikov, Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Helsinki March 17 TASS—The second session of the Baltic States Council has ended here with the adoption of the communique.

The session discussed issues of further development and deepening regional cooperation.

The final document stresses the council considers the assistance rendered to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia by the Group of 24, as well as aid to Russia to be an important contribution to the Baltic region development.

Next session of the Baltic States Council will be held in Tallinn in March 1994.

Kozyrev Returns to Meeting

LD1703194593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1905 GMT 17 Mar 93

[ITAR-TASS special correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Helsinki, 17 Mar—Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Andrey Kozyrev returned to Helsinki this evening after interrupting his stay in the Finnish capital yesterday and returning urgently to Moscow at President Yeltsin's request. Andrey Kozyrev was heading the Russian delegation to the 2-day session of the Council of Baltic States being held here.

At the final news conference of the Council, Finnish Foreign Affairs Minister Paavo Vaeyrynen announced that immediately after Kozyrev's return his working visit to Finland would begin. The program envisages a visit to Lapland.

Military Leaders To Discuss Collective Security Treaty

LD1703090293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0852 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—Problems of collective military security of the CIS member states—signatories to the collective security treaty will be discussed today by a working meeting at the headquarters of the Chief Command of the CIS Allied Armed Forces. The meeting will be attended by representatives of the Russian parliament, embassies and permanent missions of the CIS member states in Moscow, scientists, generals and officers of the Chief Command of the CIS Allied Armed Forces, a spokesman for the public information centre of the Chief Command of the CIS Allied Armed Forces told ITAR-TASS.

They plan to discuss a possibility of further coordination of joint actions of the signatories to the treaty, aimed at improving the defence potential and deepening military cooperation. The meeting will also discuss measures for putting into effect agreements in the military sphere.

Observers point to the insistent and rather effective attempts of the signatories to the collective security treaty to turn it into an instrument for resolving topical defence problems. Defence ministers of the CIS member states—signatories to the treaty met at the headquarters of the Chief Command of the Allied Armed Forces on February 27. They worked out several documents to be submitted for the consideration of a regular CIS summit, which will be held in Yerevan on April 28.

Shaposhnikov Comments

OW1703145493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1429 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, Commander-in-Chief of the CIS joint forces, told Interfax Wednesday [17 March] that he was satisfied with the results of the working meeting military officials had with representatives of the Supreme Soviet and Foreign Ministry on the setting up of a CIS collective security system.

Shaposhnikov said that although different approaches were proposed, everyone wanted to have such a system. This issue, Marshal Shaposhnikov said, will be discussed by the interparliamentary assembly in St. Petersburg towards the end of next April. In particular, a Collective Security Council (CSC) is expected to be set up where the heads of governments of the six signatories of the collective security system (Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Armenia) will sit.

Shaposhnikov said that opinions differed on the status of the Commander-in-Chief. Four heads of states think that he should report directly to the CSC. Two other unnamed countries want that position to be occupied by a Russian deputy defense minister. Shaposhnikov himself felt that the former option was more promising because it would make it easier for other CIS member nations such as Belarus to join the new alliance.

Shaposhnikov also said that the assembly would have to work on making legislative acts on defense and social security of servicemen consistent and discuss cooperation in development and manufacture of military hardware in the CIS.

Member Countries Hold Discussion

LD1703130893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1251 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—Different aspects of the practical implementation of the collective security treaty were discussed today at a working meeting in headquarters of the Supreme Commandment (as received] of the Commonwealth Allied Armed Forces.

Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, the commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth Allied Armed Forces, representatives of the Russian parliament and Foreign Ministry, embassies and diplomatic missions of Commonwealth member countries in Moscow, researchers, generals and officers of the Supreme Commandment and representatives of the armed forces of the Commonwealth countries which signed the collective security agreement took part in the meeting.

Speakers touched on problems and prospects for the creation of the military security and collective defence systems, political and legal conditions for the implementation of the treaty, the potential and aims of the military-political union of the Commonwealth member countries and the possible reaction to the establishment of the union on the part of Western countries and former Soviet republics which are not members of the Union.

The collective security system of the Commonwealth of Independent States was considered in a context of principles upheld by the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations.

Speakers compared this collective defence organisation with the existing military alliances, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov told ITAR-TASS during a break that one of the aims of today's meeting was to summarize a broad range of views of scientists, military specialists, parliamentarians and members of the public before submitting proposals for the implementation of the collective security agreement for consideration by the interparliamentary Assembly and the Commonwealth council of the heads of state.

Briefing on Ministerial Summit Results in Minsk

WS1803090193 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1533 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] A news conference for representatives of foreign embassies accredited in the Belarusian capital has been held at the headquarters of CIS coordinating organs. CIS Work Group Coordinator Ivan Korotchenya spoke about the results of the conference of CIS heads of governments recently held in Moscow. In his opinion, the elaboration of practical measures directed at overcoming the crisis has become the distinctive feature of the meeting.

At the news conference, diplomats were told about the results of CIS economic development in 1992. The same issue was considered at the Moscow conference. The results are not consolatory. The general level of production has decreased by 29 percent compared to 1989. Ivan Korotchenya said: "In fact the Commonwealth has reached the level of 1980, which means that 12 years have been wasted."

Judging by the results of the Moscow conference, the prime ministers are going to act more resolutely. In their opinion, the process of restoring the ties among branches of the economy within the CIS has begun. First steps have been made in this direction; the results of the Surgut meeting on oil and gas testify to this. CIS ministers of agriculture will soon hold a meeting in Akmolinsk. They are planning to create the Ministers of Agriculture Council. The coming meeting in Karaganda will help solve many problems in machine building.

Communications Secrecy at CIS Minsk HQ Not Guaranteed

PM1703135993 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 3

[Valeriy Kovalev report under the "Events and Commentaries" rubric: "Secrecy of Conversations Not Guaranteed. Why Is the CIS Headquarters Without Communications"]

[Text] Minsk—Ivan Korotchenya, coordinator of the CIS Working Group, has sent a letter to Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Belarus Supreme Soviet. It contains a request to create the necessary conditions for work by the Commonwealth's coordination organs.

The point is that the government communications telephones at the CIS headquarters in Minsk have been disconnected. This was done, according to Yuriy Bekhterev, staffer of the Working Group Press Service, by Belarusian KGB staffers. They attributed their actions to the fact that they are unable to guarantee the confidentiality of telephone conversations on the government communications line, conducted in the premises where the CIS coordination organs are located. There is the possibility of information leaks in view of the fact that the UN and EC missions, two foreign embassies, and several commercial structures have recently been sited under the same roof as the Commonwealth Working Group. According to spokesmen of the Belarusian special services, some of the "subtenants" may have specialists on their staff, as well as the relevant technical facilities to eavesdrop and decode conversations even on closed circuit communications channels.

The justification of the fears of Belarusian KGB staffers was also confirmed by experts from the Federal Agency for Government Communications under Russia's president, who were invited to Minsk for consultations. Here is their conclusion: The secrecy of conversations on government communications channels at the CIS headquarters can be guaranteed only when all "outside" institutions and organizations are "relocated" from the building.

And so, the telephones are disconnected for the time being. But the lack of protected communications creates serious difficulties for the work of experts and permanent plenipotentiary representatives of Commonwealth member states.

Shaposhnikov Discusses Security in Former Republics

LD1703201593 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" Newscast]

[Text] At a working meeting today of the main command of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, scientists, generals, representatives of the Russian Supreme Soviet, and of the embassies of the Commonwealth states discussed steps to maintain collective security in the former Soviet republics. In Marshal Shaposhnikov's view, the west's possible negative reaction to the creation of the CIS military-cum-political alliance should not impede the continuation of work on the military integration of the countries which only recently made up a single entity and which had a common army. Those who took the floor maintained that a unified bloc is necessary both from the political and the economic point of view. At present, there are four power centers in the world: America, Western Europe, China, and Japan, and in the view of military men the bloc of CIS countries should come to occupy a place of its own in between these centers.

[Begin Shaposhnikov recording over video of him addressing the gathering] Naturally a unipolar world is always unstable. A multipolar world is more stable. That is why we should take a look at a system of collective security from this viewpoint. [end recording]

In the view of those who took the floor, the inclusion in the collective security system of CIS countries which can potentially destabilize the situation would serve as a factor that would impede negative processes in those countries.

Views Equipment Production

LD1703190893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By correspondent S.Sokolova; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Marshal of Aviation Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov met representatives of the parliament, the Russian Foreign Ministry, CIS embassies and permanent missions in Russia, scientists, and representatives of the Commonwealth Armed Forces at the General Staff of the Commonwealth Joint Armed Forces today.

A military alliance within the framework of the CIS should primarily be of a defensive nature in order to avoid new confrontation in the world. While creating this alliance, participants in the conference believe, the emphasis should be placed on political activity and this includes, first of all, the evaluation of the consequences of military decisions and the development of a single military and technical policy.

In his speech, Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov said that, in the near future, with assistance from an inter-state commission for coordinating military and technical policy, it would be possible to solve the problem of manufacturing military equipment, which is affected, according to him, by the growing disintegration among the CIS member countries.

Trade Unions Urge Coordinated Economic Policy

OW1603131293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1123 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The leaders of the Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian trade union federations urged their countries' leaders to begin talks on economic integration, with compulsory participation of trade unions.

Their appeal to the heads of state and government says that so far, inter-state talks have not brought about any economic improvements.

The trade unions proposed measures which in their opinion will help promote economic restructuring in the their states.

They suggest that along with a single anti-inflation policy, a single currency and banking system be established, and that prices and quotas for basic products and types of fuel be regulated by the state.

The trade union federations believe that all customs barriers should be removed.

They also proposed that the three Slavic republics set up a coordinating bureau, similar to the International Labor Organization.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 18 Mar

LD1803075793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0740 GMT 18 Mar 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—By ITAR-TASS: The press continues to highlight the internal political situation in Russia. Today's newspapers carry commentaries in connection with the recently concluded 8th extraordinary Congress of the People's Deputies of the Russian Federation.

The government newspaper ROSSIISKIYE VESTI runs comments from various regions. "The situation at the congress was simply wicked. It would be the worst thing if confrontation spreads over to regions," the newspaper quotes Viktor Ishayev, administration chief of Khabarovsk territory, as saying in this connection.

In the opinion of the Yaroslavl administration chief, the newspaper points out, the conflicting sides should "moderate political ambitions".

"The Congress of People's Deputies turns into an arena for the struggle of ambitions and personalities," stated Yuriy Spiridonov, the parliament chief of the Republic of Komi, quoted by ROSSIISKIE VESTI.

Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov of Moscow believes, the newspaper reports, that Boris Yeltsin "has shown an example of calmness and staying- power to Russia and the whole world". Luzhkov is of the opinion that "in the name of Russia's interests, the president has got out of the difficult and, at times, humiliating atmosphere that predominated at the congress".

The same newspaper carries a decree issued by the presdient of the Russian Federation "On Enlarging the Composition of the Council of Ministers—the Government of the Russian Federation" and the presidential address to the heads of state of CIS countries. The texts of these documents have been also published by NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER), KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (RED STAR), and other newspapers.

ROSSIISKAYA GAZETA, newspaper of the Russian parliament, carries deputies' remarks during the discussion of items on the agenda and additional matters at last week's 8th extraordinary Congress of the People's Deputies of Russia.

"The centrist movements have not yet quite matured for a struggle for the crown of Russia. Only when they overstep the threshold of lobbying in the present government and raise their own banner, their ascent to future elections will begin," Fyodor Burlatskiy, a prominent public figure, political scientist and publicist, writes in NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA.

Burlatskiy believes in particular that those forces and leaders who will meet the people's demands will survive

and succeed in Russia. In his view, the Civil Union has approached closer than others to positions which reflect the interests of the majority of voters. This is so far only the beginning of headway but only future will show whether it will be triumphant, he points out.

The treaty on further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms (START-2) is a logical continuation of the overall arms reduction process and meets Russia's national security interests, Lieutenant General ananiy Politsyn, first deputy chief of the Centre for Military Strategic Studies, told KRASNAYA ZVEZDA.

Analysing the state of and prospects for the development of arms, he arrives at a conclusion that it is precisely the START-2 terms that are the least painful to the Russian economy from a political point of view.

Taking into account the crisis state of the country's economy and the magnitude of the problems dealt with by the treaty, Politsyn considers it advisable to adopt a comprehensive state programme to determine the financing of measures to implement the prospective arms cuts.

PRAVDA carries an interview with Dmitriy Polyanskiy, former member of the Presidium of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee of the Nikita Khrushchev days, who describes details of the preparation of the removal of Khrushchev. Polyanskiy said the resignation of the then Communist Party and government leader had been prepared by Leonid Brezhnev, Nikolay Podgorniy, and by himself.

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA runs a statement issued by the political council of the National Salvation Front of Russia which warns "all representatives of power structures about their personal responsibility for unlawful actions against their own people."

PRAVDA carries an interview with Josef Lenart, former Czechoslovak prime minister and first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia.

"For decades we underestimated the methods of dialogue with opponents either within the party, the National Front or even in the administration of the state," Lenart said in comment on the events during the velvet revolution period in the country. "We proved unprepared for that and a strong opposition caught us unawares."

General Denies Russian Troops Fighting for Abkhazia

LD1703140593 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Excerpt] General Viktor Sorokin, a senior officer of the operational group of Russia's troops in Abkhazia, has denied the statement of Georgia's Government about an alleged involvement of Russia's military units in the fighting on the side of Abkhazia. We adhere to strict neutrality, said the general, but if our facilities are attacked we shall retaliate. [passage omitted]

Georgian Negotiator Says Talks 'Deadlocked'

LD1703150493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1423 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Gvritishvili]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—"The current Russo-Georgian talks in Moscow on the principles of interstate relations are deadlocked, but they will be continued," Mikhail Ukleba, Georgia's first deputy foreign minister, who is leading the Georgian delegation, told a news conference today.

He said it is the Russian side which is mainly to blame for the deadlock. It does not want to discuss a draft treaty between Russia and Georgia as a package, but is trying to impose a discussion of military questions, first and foremost. Furthermore, the Russian side is making a settlement of the armed conflict in Abkhazia a precondition for the signing of a treaty. The Georgian side regards this as interference in the republic's internal affairs and an attempt to make the talks drag on endlessly, Mikhail Ukleba stressed.

The deputy minister described the presence of Russian troops in Abkhazia as the main reason for the escalation of the armed conflict there. He said these troops are playing a direct part in the fighting against Georgian forces.

Discusses Sukhumi Bombing Casualties

OW1703174593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] One-third of all the casualties in the recent bombings of Sukhumi were Russians. Mikhail Ukleba, head of the Georgian delegation in Russian-Georgian negotiations announced at a press conference in Moscow Wednesday [17 March].

A memo from the Georgian Foreign Ministry to the Russian foreign policy department notes that during the March 14-15 bombings of Sukhumi by Russian aviation, 107 people were killed and several hundred were wounded.

Regarding the course of reforms in Moscow, Ukleba said that at present they had "come to a dead end, since they are being conducted only for the sake of negotiations." The Georgian diplomat blamed the Russian side for this. Moscow, Ukleba said, is linking the signing of a Russian-Georgian political agreement to the Abkhazian dilemma.

The Georgian representative said that the numerous statements from the Russian Supreme Soviet on the need to resolve economic issues with Georgia after the settlement of the Abkhazian conflict constituted intervention in the internal affairs of his country.

"We are already unable to resolve all the problems which have built up due to the activities of reactionary forces. A high-level meeting is needed," said Ukleba. He declined to clarify who he was referring to with the words "reactionary forces."

Foreign Ministry Denies Involvement in Abkhazia

LD1703193993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1913 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—The Russian Foreign Ministry has made a statement on Wednesday [17 March] denying Georgia's charges alleging that a Russian military unit, stationed in the area of Gudauty, was directly involved in recent days in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict.

With reference to competent military sources, the Russian Foreign Ministry declared that no Russian military unit and no Russian servicemen took part in recent developments in the conflict zone.

The statement pointed out that Russia's position towards the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict is to keep strict neutrality and in every possible way to promote the settlement of the conflict.

The Russian Foreign Ministry drew attention to continuing attacks on Russian military formations, temporarily stationed on Georgia's territory, and illegal attempts to seize their property.

Continued shelling of the zone of Eshery where the Russian unit is stationed can be regarded as no other than deliberate attempts to provoke retaliatory measures and gain an opportunity of accusing Russia of being an accomplice in the conflict, the statement said.

The Russian Foreign Ministry believes that the only way to resolve the conflict is to immediately resume negotiations on the basis of a final document adopted at the Moscow meeting on September 3, 1992 and which was approved by the international community, including by the U.N. Security Council.

Defense Ministry Issues Statement

LD1803105593 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 0900 GMT 18 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] We begin our bulletin with a statement by the Russian Defense Ministry which reached our editorial offices just before this program began. This statement, which was made in connection with the increased Georgian-Abkhazian hostilities and the exacerbation of the situation around Russian facilities in the conflict zone, says that on (?17) March a seismic laboratory and a military sanatorium belonging to the Russian Federation Defense Ministry in Sukhumi and Eshery were subjected to air and artillery shelling. As a result, five civilians were killed and eight injured.

The Georgian side, the document points out, has previously stated more than once the impermissibility of such actions but it is clear that such statements by the Georgian Military Command are not being observed in practice.

It is perfectly clear that behind such provocative acts by the Georgian side can be seen a desire to draw the Russian Army into the armed conflict, to play the army card, and thus strain to the limit the already rather difficult Russian-Georgian relations.

The Russian Federation Ministry of Defense is issuing a resolute protest to the Georgian side, reaffirming that Russian troops are not taking part in the conflict. In the event of a continuation of the unlawful actions in relation to Russian facilities, Russian troops will be more resolute in the use of all the means at their disposal in order to thwart any provocations and adopt measures, including armed measures, to protect the honor, dignity, and lives of military servicemen and the members of their families.

'Civic Diplomacy' Statement Cited

LD1703233993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2143 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Gvritashviliy]

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—"The escalation of war in Abkhazia can bring about tragic consequences for Russia," says a statement circulated on Wednesday by an International Committee for Civic Diplomacy, the International Foundation for Humanitarian Initiatives and the Civic Accord Association registered by the Russian Ministry of Justice.

Recent reports from Abkhazia point out to the sharp escalation of the military conflict, caused "by interference of Russian servicemen into Abkhazian-Georgian confrontation." It was reported that SU-25 planes, led by Russian pilots, were bombarding Sukhumi killing peaceful civilians, old people, women and children. We do not know who directs Russian soldiers in Abkhazia, but at any rate, at issue is direct encroachment by certain Russian circles upon state independence and territorial integrity of Georgia—an independent state, a U.N. and CSCE member-state, the statement said.

It was pointed out that "the participation of Russian servicemen in military operations in Abkhazia can arouse prejudice against Russia in Georgia and for a long time undermine close and friendly ties between Russia and Georgia," the statement said.

All of this is done to compromise the reputation of Boris Yeltsin as commander-in-chief of the Russian Armed Forces by making the Georgian people believe that the head of the Russian state bears the responsibility for provocative actions of Russian troops in Abkhazia."

The International Committee for Civic Diplomacy, the International Foundation for Humanitarian Initiatives and the Civic Peace Association call upon Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the Russian Parliament to do everything possible to end "the Russian involvement" in Georgian-Abkhazian confrontation and take measures to immediately withdraw Russian servicemen from the territory of Abkhazia and in this way save the lives of young soldiers involved into a military-political adventure alien to Russia's national interests.

"We call on all Russia's political parties, movements and public organisations and the Russian people to voice a protest against military interference in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict and not to impede the settlement of the conflict by peaceful means," the statement said.

Kozyrev Back in Finland To Begin 'Working Visit'

LD1803041793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2046 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Helsinki, 17 Mar—"My departure for Moscow from the second session of the Council of Baltic States (CBS) taking place here was caused, naturally, by political necessity: Important Russian-French talks were taking place in Moscow at the top level, and French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas had requested a meeting," Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev told an ITAR-TASS correspondent immediately after his return late this evening to the Finnish capital. "Everything went well. This morning I took part in the work of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. Everything went quite normally and successfully. Everything will be in order."

Andrey Kozyrev expressed great satisfaction that all the proposals made by the Russian side had been adopted in one form or another at the second session of the CBS. "We gave particular importance to instituting the post of CBS commissar on human rights and questions of ethnic minorities," the minister stressed.

"My working visit to Finland begins tomorrow," the minister said in conclusion. "We have things to talk about and we will be exchanging opinions on bilateral Russian-Finnish relations and regional relations."

'Exchange of Opinions' Noted

LD1803095493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0922 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Helsinki March 18 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev began his working visit to Finland. All events provided for in his visit programme will be held in the country's north—Lapland.

Kozyrev accompanied by his Finnish counterpart Paavo Vaeyrynen flew this morning from Helsinki to the city of Rovaniemi situated just outside the Arctic Circle.

The two ministers will continue the exchange of opinions, in an informal atmosphere, on the entire range of bilateral relations as well as on pressing issues of regional cooperation in Northern Europe and among Baltic countries. They will also discuss international questions during the trip.

Today's programme provides for a visit to a research centre in Rovaniemi, which opened last December. The centre specialises in studying the Arctic region.

Later in the day, the ministers will visit the village of Salla, Eastern Lapland, where they will inspect the operation of the Finnish check point on the Russian-Finnish border and even cross the border on skis.

The city of Kittilae, Western Lapland, is the last point on today's programme.

Finnish Defense Minister Arrives in Moscow

PM1803120193 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 1

[Russian Federation Defense Ministry Press Center report: "Working Visit"]

[Text] Mrs. Elisabeth Rehn, Finland's minister of defense, arrives in Moscow 17 March on a working visit at the invitation of Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian Federation minister of defense.

Meetings with the Russian defense minister and the commander of Leningrad Military District and visits to the General Staff Military Academy and a military unit in Vyborg are scheduled during the two-day visit.

Meets Grachev

LD1703145793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1107 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—The Russian military doctrine, the reform in the Russian armed forces, the situation in the Army and in society, the activities of Russian units on the Finnish border, the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic states, and Russia's position on NATO's role in Europe were some of the questions discussed by the Russian and the Finnish defense ministers, Pavel Grachev and Elisabeth Rehn, during today's meeting at the Russian military department. Army General Grachev also pointed out before the meeting that they have planned another discussion of a list of questions submitted by the Finnish side. Its content has not been specified.

Pavel Grachev welcomed the successful development of contacts between the two countries' defense ministries. He called the plan of joint activities for 1993-94 "a solid base for further consolidating Russian-Finnish relations within the framework of the military departments." He said the development of bilateral contacts is happening against the background of "a considerable improvement in relations between Russia and all the European countries," including Norway, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Spain, and Germany. Army General Grachev also repeated that at the invitation from NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner, he is going to deliver a speech at a sitting of the North Atlantic Alliance in Brussels on 28 March.

Elisabeth Rehn described the cooperation between Finland's and Russia's military departments as "very good," and the contacts between them as "quite close and frequent." She expressed confidence that the return visit of the Russian defense minister to Finland, scheduled for October, will make it possible to continue the dialogue on all issues that are of mutual interest.

The Finnish guest's program for today includes a visit to the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces. On Thursday she will fly to St. Petersburg, where she will meet the command of the Leningrad Military District.

Grachev Comments

LD1703170693 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1500 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Military television agency correspondent Ilyin report from the Kremlin; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Finnish Defense Minister Elizabeth Rehn has arrived in Moscow on a two-day working visit. It is unusual to see a charming woman at the head of a defense ministry, but the post obliges, and the minister—who has a degree in economics—today met with Russian Minister of Defence Pavel Grachev.

The visit's agenda also includes visits to the General Staff Academy and the military unit in the Leningrad Military District stationed in the town of Vyborg. In the course of the meeting, Pavel Grachev informed his

colleague from Finland about the latest measures implemented in the Russian Army and spoke about withdrawal of our troops from the Baltic states and Russia's approach to cooperation with NATO, speaking, at the same time, about his planned address to the 28 March session of the North Atlantic Assembly.

Answering journalists' questions on the post-congress situation in the Army, and confirming that the Army was and will continue to stay away from politics, Pavel Grachev noted:

[Begin Grachev recording] With improvements in the social provision for the Army, especially remuneration—as you know, the wages were increased 2.7 times—the situation has significantly stabilized. The Army is subordinate only to the Constitution and law. [end recording] [Video shows Rehn meeting with Grachev and Grachev talking to journalists]

Rehn Comments

LD1703202793 Helsinki Suomen Yleisradio Network in Finnish 1530 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Finnish Defense Minister Elisabeth Rehn's comments recorded]

[Text] In his talks with Defense Minister Elisabeth Rehn in Moscow, Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev appealed for patience in Finland regarding the issue of the withdrawal of Russian troops from Finland's border areas. Rehn described the discussions as very open. Mikko Eronen reports:

[Eronen] Defense Minister Elisabeth Rehn was very satisfied after her talks with Defense Minister Pavel Grachev in Moscow today.

[Rehn] There was no need to hide anything. We really discussed very clearly what is happening in this country and where the difficulties are. It was a good lesson for us all.

[Eronen] She compared her official visit to the recent visit to St. Petersburg by the Diet Defense Committee.

[Rehn] I chose a program which differs from their visit. We want information which cannot be obtained by looking at structures or airports, but I wanted a staff presentation in Vyborg where Finnish visits have not been made. This was an entirely new and interesting opening.

[Eronen] Rehn says that she and Grachev ran out of time, so that she will receive a report on the situation surrounding the Russian troops near the Finnish border only tomorrow in the Leningrad Military District. According to Rehn, Grachev asked for patience with regard to the troops withdrawal because the social consequences of the process are difficult on an individual level.

[Rehn] Several times he appealed for understanding saying that if something is to be arranged for these people on a personal level, then a very rapid withdrawal is not possible. Here he particularly thought about the situation in the Baltic where the timetable is being adhered to, especially with regard to Lithuania, which has clear plans and timetables, but where he thought that we must also understand the fact that something must be arranged instead for these people coming from there.

[Eronen] After hearing a report from Grachev on cooperation between Russia and NATO, Rehn wondered about the Finns' attitude toward NATO.

[Rehn] We are still shrinking back from NATO, whereas my counterpart, Pavel Grachev, is going there in the near future on a familiarization visit at Woerner's invitation, and will address NATO. The attitude in Finland is very different.

[Eronen] Arms deals were not discussed this time, not even the spare parts for the MiG fighters bought by Finland which have been paid for, but which have not yet been received in Finland. In Rehn's view, the matter is not directly her responsibility but that of people responsible for trade policy.

[Rehn] I believe that we will be able to solve this problem through commercial means.

Paper Details Talks

PM1803130593 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 18 Mar 93 p 1

[Ravil Mustafin report from "From Our News Bureau" roundup: "Meeting Held"]

[Text] Finnish Defense Minister Mrs. Elizabeth Rehn arrived in Moscow 17 March at the invitation of Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian Federation minister of defense, on a two-day working visit.

During the first half of the day a meeting took place between P. Grachev and E. Rehn during which the sides discussed a wide range of questions of mutual interest. The Russian defense minister brought his Finnish colleague up to date on the progress of the military reform of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, military doctrine, and military policy, on the measures being conducted by the Russian Federation Armed Forces on the Russian-Finnish border, on the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic states, and also on Russia's approaches to NATO's role in Europe, and the development of cooperation with this organization.

The heads of the Russian and Finnish military departments expressed satisfaction at the development of bilateral contacts and cooperation in military policy.

That same day, Elizabeth Rehn visited the Russian Federation Armed Forces General Staff Military Academy.

U.S. Concerned Over Resumed Kidnapping Reports

PM1803120393 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 2100 GMT 12 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The U.S. intelligence service has issued a special warning to services responsible for the security of U.S. citizens abroad.

According to reports in the Israeli press, the United States is alarmed in connection with a conference of various fundamentalist Muslim groupings held in Iran recently at which a decision was made to resume the practice of kidnapping foreign citizens, in particular in Lebanon.

Kozyrev Says 'No Changes' Anticipated in U.S. Summit

OW1703173193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1709 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "We have eliminated the concept of big brother, but from the looks of things Russia has retained the dubious privilege of always being guilty." This was Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's response to Tbilisi's accusations that Russian troops have been participating in the conflict in Abkhazia. "Moreover, in order to sit down at the negotiating table and look for peaceful ways to resolve the conflict, someone apparently thinks it's easier to blame Russia, although to us this route seems pointless," said Kozyrev.

The minister said that "staff changes in the Russian government have come to a head," but maintained that his "sudden" return to Moscow from Helsinki was not related to this. He said that on Wednesday [17 March] he participated in Security Council work, where "planning issues were calmly discussed," but he did not go into detail.

In response to a question from INTERFAX, Kozyrev said that the Russian-American summit in Vancouver has not been postponed, and "no changes here are anticipated."

Discussing the need to conduct a special G-7 meeting on issues of aid to Russia, Kozyrev said that on Wednesday he spoke with Italian Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo, who expressed his readiness to study specific ways to grant additional aid to the Russian economy during the transition period.

In general, Kozyrev said that although Western aid is important, it is not the deciding factor for the survival of democracy in Russia. "But the sooner it is allocated the better, since the fight for democracy and market reforms in Russia is still going on, and there will be more outbursts of revanchism from the red-browns," he said.

Speaking on the domestic political situation in Russia, the minister said that he does not share the viewpoint that President Boris Yeltsin and his team were defeated at the recent Congress of People's Deputies.

According to Kozyrev, Yeltsin recognizes the seriousness of the political challenge launched at him at the Congress, as well as the presence of a revanchist threat. "The head of the Russian state is in full control of the situation and is not going to panic at each address from the congressional tribunal," said the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry. He said that attempts to switch to "a psychic attack" on reforms had already been made. But, the minister said, there is no cause for hysterics. He also emphasized that Russian foreign policy is not changing. "Russia will remain a stable foreign policy partner," pledged Kozyrev.

Kozyrev said he would return to Helsinki on Wednesday evening. On March 18-19 he plans to make a work-related visit to Finland.

Zorkin Reportedly To Cut U.S. Visit Short

LD1703210993 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 17 Mar 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The ITAR-TASS news agency reported today that Valeriy Zorkin, chairman of the Russian Constitutional Court, has decided to cut short his visit to the United States and flew to Moscow today.

Meets U.S. Congress, Senate Officials

LD1803110193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1051 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Matyash]

[Text] Washington March 18 TASS—On Wednesday before leaving for Moscow, the Chairman of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court Valeriy Zorkin had a meeting with Speaker Thomas Foley. Zorkin was accompanied by Russia's Ambassador to the U.S. Vladimir Lukin.

According to Michael O'Neil, deputy press-secretary on foreign policy issues of the speaker the meeting was of exclusively cordial nature. They discussed the main provisions of the Russian constitution and the latest political events in Russia.

The meeting showed that Zorkin is a staunch supporter of the constitutional order in the country, and he expounded his opinion to the speaker. Would-be political events on the Russian political scene, correlation of forces between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and representatives of the Russian Congress of People's Deputies were also discussed, Mr. O'Neil said.

On behalf of the American lawmakers Mr. Thomas Foley expressed the opinion that an exchange of delegations

between the U.S. Congress and the Russian Parliament could be very useful to study mechanisms of activities of the U.S. supreme legislature bodies, Michael O'Neil added.

Mutual exchanges of parliamentary delegations are very valuable to both countries and can serve the purpose of broadening friendly ties between the peoples of America and Russia, he said.

Valeriy Zorkin also had talks with Joseph Biden, chairman of the U.S. Senate Judicial Committee, during which they discussed issues of cooperation between court representatives and judicial systems of the two countries.

Returns to Moscow

LD1703221693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2157 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Washington March 18 TASS—Chairman of the Russian Constitutional Court, Valeriy Zorkin, has decided to break off his visit to the United States and return to Moscow, ITAR-TASS learned from a well-informed source in the delegation of the president of the Russian Constitutional Court.

Zorkin has made this decision following heated debates on different ways of political and constitutional developments in Russia which began on March 17.

Zorkin was visiting the United States at the invitation of the chairman of the U.S. Supreme Court, William Rehnquist, to familiarize himself with the U.S. federal judicial system.

In Washington, Zorkin met with the U.S. President Bill Clinton in the White House.

UN Envoy Says Clinton Has 'Interesting Plan' for Russia

MK1703141693 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 4

[Interview with Yuliy Vorontsov, Russia's permanent representative at the United Nations, by Igor Drobyshev in New York under "exclusive" rubric; date not given: "Clinton Has an Interesting Plan With Regard to Russia"]

[Text] [Drobyshev] Yuliy Mikhaylovich, Bill Clinton's statement about his determination to support Russia sounded promising.

[Vorontsov] To all appearances, he will have an interesting plan. One that is phased in over a period of time.

[Drobyshev] Maybe you know something about it?

[Vorontsov] I do know something, but let him say it himself. He has interesting ideas. As a matter of fact, an entire group of his people have been working here. They consulted with us...

[Drobyshev] You mean, his advisers?

[Vorontsov] His advisers, those around him. It will be a comprehensive plan—that is what is interesting about it. A comprehensive plan in terms of both its scope and the makeup of its participants. It will be not the United States only, but the entire developed Western world.

[Drobyshev] Will this assistance be only for Russia, or for all the CIS countries?

[Vorontsov] Well, primarily for Russia, but for the others too. They are not dividing us yet: It is we who divide ourselves so well. The West says: "No, we look at you as people with a common future." I believe that assistance has to be large-scale and serious, phased in over a period of time, a staged process.

[Drobyshev] In Russia there is a widely held stereotype of Western assistance—that it involves some large sums of money. The promised 24 billions have not yet been forgotten either...

[Vorontsov] Assistance does not necessarily have to take the form of money. Money is a good thing. But better still is to assist by advice, by sharing with us the Western countries' latest achievements. They can assist us in solving the main problem—creating a market economy. We will be quick learners, and soon we will grasp how we should develop further. To give you one good example: Our own and some American bankers joined forces and created a Russian-American banking forum. I am one of its two cochairmen. Under the forum's sponsorship around 250 Russian bankers will come here next summer for practical on-the-spot studies in order to assimilate the latest achievements in the banking sector. This is, in my view, an example of real assistance. As for the 24 billion... Be it even 240 billion. First, it is very problematic that we will ever receive the money. Second, it will only serve to sap us. Imagine, someone will say: "We will give you 240 billion." We will stop working and start looking in the direction from where it is to appear. We have to work on our own; only we ourselves are capable of raising ourselves to a modern level.

[Drobyshev] Still, some money apparently will be promised. But from where it will be taken? Clinton is in a serious mood for cutting the budget deficit by raising taxes on the one hand and cutting state expenditures on the other.

[Vorontsov] Obviously, they do have to be cut. They have so much redundant "fat" over here. It has to be cut.

[Drobyshev] What do you mean by fat?

[Vorontsov] The defense budget alone is $300 billion. Just imagine—to spend such an amount in 365 days! And the next year another 300 billion will again be needed. This is simply fantastic! The more so because there is no military threat now, and they do not have to brace themselves for a world war. Evidently it is nothing but fat. They will cut it and will be right to do so.

[Drobyshev] There have been reports that it is from the Pentagon budget that an amount on the order of $40 billion will be allocated for assistance to the CIS countries.

[Vorontsov] But it is very little. I think that both the Pentagon and the White House ought to think on a larger scale.

[Drobyshev] One gets the impression that Clinton, who promised during his election campaign to focus on domestic economic problems, to go face to face with America, is being continuously drawn into finding solutions to international problems.

[Vorontsov] He has already turned that way. He has submitted his economic package to Congress, and Congress is now pulling it around. But Clinton cannot stay aloof from the world in which the United States lives. Look what has happened. As soon as he was inaugurated events intensified, for example, in the Balkans. He of all people cannot say: No, I don't see any of that...

Clinton Views Russia's Future With 'Optimism'

PM1803113193 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 7

[Ye. Ovcharenko report: "Clinton's Sights Set on 'G-7': U.S. President Views Russia's Future With Optimism"]

[Text] New York—The snowstorm which blanketed America's eastern seaboard this past weekend virtually paralyzed Americans' life, but the press here did not want to know what officials and trustworthy experts think about the prospects of a "Storm in the East." The inevitable question, one which cropped up long ago, was: Whom should Washington support in present conditions?

"What would you say to those who think that you are counting on Yeltsin too much?" journalists asked the President on Saturday. Bill Clinton quite firmly rejected the criticism implicit in the question and noted that in his opinion Washington should support Yeltsin because he was elected by the people and has demonstrated a passionate commitment to democracy and economic reforms.

The U.S. President ended his commentary on an optimistic note, saying that the country's progress toward democracy and the market economy cannot be easy. "Russia can still expect a brilliant place in the world community of nations," Clinton said.

This forecast was considerably more upbeat than the opinion expressed in an interview on ABC TV by former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Even though he does not believe that there is a likelihood of Russia's return to the communist system, in his view there could be a movement back to a Pinochet-type system where an authoritarian government would be created under anyone's leadership, Yeltsin's included, and would then seek to implement economic reforms.

"I support economic help for Russia. But I do not think that this economic help should be linked to any specific figure," Kissinger remarked.

There is another opinion being widely canvassed in America right now, namely that the decision to hold the meeting in Vancouver was hasty. Such a public dialogue is a bonus for the Russian leader prior to the referendum, but what will happen if the crisis in Russia deepens?—that is the question being asked in America. As I understand it, the way that the Vancouver meeting decision was adopted speaks for itself. Literally the day before the President's immediate entourage, including people responsible for relations with Russia, plainly asserted in off-the-record conversations with the press that the date for the "summit" was not set and there was no hurry about it. Then suddenly right after the well known demonstration in Moscow the date was set virtually instantaneously for 4 April. In politics there is usually a reason for such improvisations.

U.S. Military Policy Developments Examined

PM1703161993 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 3

["Military Review" article by Manki Ponomarev: "Opening Moves in a Game Calculated To Take Years"]

[Text] It is more than 50 days since Bill Clinton settled in the White House—one-half of the 100 days traditionally given to each new U.S. President to settle in his office and determine the basic guidelines of domestic and foreign policy. In some spheres—like the economy, for example—the guidelines for the future have already been mapped out. Work is only just beginning in some other spheres.

This also applies to U.S. military policy. Summing it up, THE WASHINGTON POST was fully justified in writing that "Clinton's program in the defense sphere is more like the opening moves at the start of a game than a fundamental policy." But even people unskilled in the game of chess realize that the opening itself can give an indication of how events will develop.

Documents published by the U.S. press show that the Department of Defense, which plays a key role in the sphere of ensuring national security, is assigned two basic tasks—to maintain the combat readiness of the country's Armed Forces under the inevitable reduction of their numerical strength, and to respond to the threats emerging following the end of the "cold war" in a rapidly changing world.

Clinton spoke of his intention to significantly reduce military expenditures and reduce the Armed Forces' numerical strength even during the election campaign. It is possible, though, that the United States may be forced

to embark on reductions of the military budget, personnel strength, equipment, and scale of training that may be considerably more radical than intended earlier. According to the U.S. press, and AVIATION WEEK AND SPACE TECHNOLOGY in particular, there are plans to cut the Pentagon's budget by $88 billion by fiscal 1997, and by a further $39 billion by 1998. This will result in reducing the Armed Forces' numerical strength from 1.8 million to 1.4 million servicemen.

The press has also mentioned modernization programs "which are no longer needed to repulse anticipated threats." They include an almost total rejection of a new generation of armored fighting vehicles for the Army, the mothballing of 57 surface ships and submarines, rejection of the "MilStar" military satellite communications systems, reducing by one-half the fleet of B-1B "Lancer" and B-52H heavy bombers, and a series of others. Nonetheless, the U.S. Armed Forces will remain for the foreseeable future, if not the numerically strongest, then certainly the mightiest in the world. This applies to their armament and equipment, their level of training, their deployment built on the principle of "forward basing" on territories abroad, and their ramified infrastructure. The U.S. political leadership is justified in calculating that the U.S. Armed Forces are capable of implementing its strategy in the sphere of national security, parrying or neutralizing any emerging threats.

People in Washington single out several such threats to U.S. security prevailing in the international arena.

As distinct from previous years, there is no longer any talk about the danger of a worldwide nuclear missile war or the threat of a mass attack from the East. The image of Russia—legal successor to the former USSR and heir to the bulk of its past military might—as a hostile power or enemy number one has receded into the past together with the global confrontation. It was no accident that the following was emphasized during recent hearings at the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee: "The consolidation of political and economic reforms in the former USSR is a vitally important task from the viewpoint of U.S. security. Democracy's success is important for the future of our economy: Cutbacks in our military expenditures from the viewpoint of long-term prospects are logical because Russia and the other nuclear republics have reduced the threat to our security emanating from them."

At the same time, however, people in Washington make no secret of their worry about the fact that Russia is the only power which could stand up to the U.S. military might. "Even though the likelihood of a mass nuclear strike against the United States has diminished," it was said at those selfsame Senate committee hearings, "the risk that one, two, or 10 nuclear devices may be used—even against the United States—has increased."

For understandable reasons, virtually nothing is said aloud about the strictly military methods for eliminating this threat like, for example, preparations for preventive intervention. Yet much has been said about nuclear partnership with Russia. Partnership in the security sphere also presupposes expanded access to Russian military circles which, from the U.S. point of view, are the most influential force in establishing stability on the former USSR's territory and, consequently, throughout Europe.

Fears about the possible proliferation of nuclear weapons among different countries in the world, often hostile to the United States, are now elevated to a leading position in U.S. security policy. "Instead of the Soviet Union's 1,000 nuclear warheads, the new nuclear danger may emanate from a few warheads which have ended up in the hands of terrorists or of states pursuing a policy of terrorism," U.S. Secretary of Defense Les Aspin emphasizes.

Proceeding from this premise, the U.S. Strategic Command has initiated a review of the concept of "nuclear deterrence." It is assumed that, by way of a last resort, it will envisage the possible use of U.S. nuclear weapons against countries threatening to use their own weapons of mass destruction. True enough, these ideas have yet to receive official approval. But work on them is proceeding seriously.

For the time being—and this must be borne in mind—missiles are targeted on the former Soviet republics as before and, THE NEW YORK TIMES writes, Strategic Command officers are rehearsing 10 times a day "responses in the event of nuclear attack."

From Washington's point of view, the threat of regional conflicts is becoming increasingly tangible. They do not pose any threat to the existence of the United States, but nonetheless they are a potential threat to vitally important U.S. interests. The Armed Forces are called upon to remain capable of resolutely intervening in these conflicts, with the ways out of them being as clear to the Pentagon as the ways for getting in. There could be different responses to such conflicts—ranging from large-scale military intervention as in the Persian Gulf region, to the performance of humanitarian missions and the airdrops of food and medicines as is being done in Bosnia. In any case, however, it is up to the military to parry regional threats.

Finally, one more problem which presents itself to the U.S. military leadership in all its magnitude—participation in the revival of its own country's economy, primarily in connection with the conversion of military production. Rough plans for the next four years have already been made in this sphere. Major sums are being appropriated for the conversion of military-industrial complex enterprises and institutions, with approximately one-third of them being charged to the Department of Defense. This work is being done quite thoroughly, without haste, taking into account the interests of the Armed Forces, of the military-industrial corporations, and of the regions where their enterprises are located. Thus, the controversial program for the

creation [sozdaniye] of the V-22 "Osprey" vertical takeoff aircraft has been retained at a cost of $30 billion on the insistence of Pennsylvania and Texas, because the aircraft is to be built at plants located in these two states.

All these threats and problems, which have presented themselves to the new U.S. Administration which has only just taken over and to the new leadership of the Department of Defense, prompt the formulation of the objectives and principles of U.S. military strategy. According to General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the central idea of this strategy, which should in essence play the role of U.S. military doctrine, boils down to switching the focal point from the waging of global war to local conflicts. This strategy should bank on the ability to cope with individual crises without them evolving into a thermonuclear war.

In order to meet the requirements of this strategy, the Armed Forces must be geared to the maintenance of their potential and to the repulsion of threats, in Powell's opinion. The forces geared to the maintenance of potential are described by him as "base forces." As for the repulsion of threats, this requires forces geared to operations in the Atlantic region, the Asia-Pacific region, and possible armed conflicts in other regions, as well as to the maintenance of nuclear deterrence. Despite all the cutbacks, the U.S. military-political leadership is planning to have nuclear forces which are modern, effective, and ready for use, relying on the most stable element of the nuclear triad—submarines carrying ballistic missiles.

This is an overview of the opening moves in the sphere of formulating the U.S. national security strategy and the means for its implementation, being made by the Clinton administration and the Pentagon. There could be, and there certainly will be, fine-tuning, amendments, and even fresh turnarounds. Overall, however, the orientation of this strategy and the ways to build the Armed Forces in the future are becoming increasingly definite.

Canada's Mulroney Supports G-7 Meeting on Russia

LD1703143293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1423 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valentin Vasilets]

[Text] Ottawa March 17 TASS—Prime Minister Brian Mulroney of Canada is prepared to participate in a special meeting of the Group of Seven leading industrialized countries (G-7) to discuss the issue on rendering urgent aid to Russia, as well as help convene such a meeting. According to Brian Mulroney, such a meeting should be held immediately after the Russo-American summit meeting scheduled for April 3 and 4 in Vancouver, Mark Entwistle, press secretary of the Canadian prime minister, told ITAR-TASS.

According to Brian Mulroney, he is following closely the development of the situation in Russia. The premier insists on rendering powerful support by the West to the democratic process in Russia and President Boris Yeltsin. The prime minister's position is absolutely clear: Boris Yeltsin is the first democratically elected Russian president, and as a democratically elected leader, he deserves support and has the right to expect it. The Canadian prime minister believes that the West must render aid not in some distant future but urgently.

As for the forms of mobilizing such support, the prime minister approves the idea of rapid actions by the G-7 group. Whether it is necessary to hold a meeting of heads of state and government for this purpose—it is for the Western leaders to decide. If the G-7 leaders come to the conclusion on the necessity to convene an extraordinary meeting on the situation in Russia before the summit in Tokyo, then, the Canadian prime minister believes that, possibly, there is some sense in holding the extraordinary meeting immediately after the talks between Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton in Vancouver, Brian Mulroney's press secretary pointed out.

Visit by New Zealand's Bolger Previewed

OW1703191993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1616 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] There are no political problems or ideological disputes in relations between Russia and New Zealand, and the prospects for developing bilateral contacts are rather hopeful, a high-ranking member of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Asia-Pacific Department told IF's [INTERFAX's] correspondent on the eve of a visit to Moscow by New Zealand's Prime Minister, James Bolger.

With reference to bilateral economic relations the diplomat said that last year the turnover between the two countries fell by five- sixths, with the balance of trade in favor of New Zealand. The main restraining factor in this area is Russia's debt amounting to about 200 million dollars, which formed as a result of the failure to pay for the deliveries of farm produce. This issue is included in the agenda of the talks between Russia and New Zealand which begin on Thursday, and it might be resolved. During James Bolger's visit the two countries might sign an intergovernmental agreement on air flights.

The official visit of James Bolger and his wife begins Wednesday [17 March] evening. On Thursday (at about 15:00) the Prime Minister of New Zealand is expected to hold talks with the Russian Premier, Viktor Chernomyrdin.

On Friday he is to confer with Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Shokhin (at 9:30), with Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy (at 11:00) and with President Boris Yeltsin (at 15:00). The same day James Bolger is to give a news conference at the press center of Russia's Foreign Ministry at 16:30.

New Zealand Prime Minister Arrives

LD1703223193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1823 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Boris Krivoshey]

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—New Zealand Premier James Bolger arrived on Wednesday on a two-day official visit to Moscow at the invitation of the Russian Government. It is the first visit of a New Zealand premier to Russia.

The New Zealand premier is expected to meet with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy.

Churkin on Prospects for Role in Balkans

MK1703103693 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No. 12, 21 Mar 93 (Signed to Press 16 Mar 93) p A15

[Interview with Vitaliy Churkin, deputy foreign minister, by Aleksey Pushkov; place and date not given: "'Russia's Voice Must Be Heard in the Balkans"]

[Text] Last week Vitaliy Churkin, Russian deputy foreign minister, returned from New York, where he had been attending the talks on Bosnia as the Russian president's special representative. In an interview with MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI he shares his views on the prospects for a settlement in Yugoslavia.

[Pushkov] Representatives of the United States and Russia have become directly involved in the settlement process for the first time. What new element has this introduced into the negotiating process?

[Churkin] I must say right away that we had no intention of opening our own negotiating front. Both Bartholomew and I saw helping cochairmen Vance and Owen as our job. As for something new, the influence on the sides participating in the talks became more focused and more vigorous.

[Pushkov] Why was it not Russia, but France, that took the initiative on bringing Yugoslav President Milosevic into the talks?

[Churkin] There is no competition here. We highly appreciate President Mitterrand's initiative. It would be wrong to give the impression that only Russia can work with the Serbs. Incidentally, the role of Russia's special representative in New York was not to be the mouthpiece of one of the delegations. We are not assuming responsibility for the Serbian side's behavior. But since our communication channels with Belgrade have always remained open, we are trying to use them to discuss with them problems arising at the talks in a more candid way.

[Pushkov] How would you describe the U.S. position; how far is it from Russia's approach?

[Churkin] In my view, the most important thing is that the Americans have finally come to appreciate that there is no alternative to the Vance-Owen plan. We agree on that. It is true that the Americans have expressed different ideas on how to influence the sides involved in the conflict. The new U.S. Administration's positions originally contained such elements as the immediate imposition of additional sanctions against Yugoslavia and the adoption of a resolution on the use of force to ensure observance of the ban on flights over Bosnia. But in the course of contacts, including contacts with us, these differences were ironed out.

At the talks U.S. representative Bartholomew was most active working with the Muslim delegation. So far neither the Muslims nor the Serbs have accepted the Vance-Owen plan, in particular the map of territorial division in Bosnia. As I understand it, the U.S. side considers it its task to help Bosnian President Izetbegovic to do what he promised on leaving New York: persuade his colleagues in the leadership to accept the Vance-Owen course.

[Pushkov] What do you think of the recent statement by Butrus-Ghali about the possible use of force against the Serbs in Bosnia?

[Churkin] I repeat, as yet the two sides have not given their consent to the Vance-Owen plan. So it is obviously premature to talk about any kind of extreme measures to influence one of them. If one side were to agree, while the other did not, then the situation would be entirely different.

In any case, when they talk about military measures, they nonetheless mean the use of UN forces after the sides have come to an understanding. So I see Butrus-Ghali's statement as a logical reference by the UN secretary general to extreme methods that are laid down in the organization's charter and provide in certain cases for the possibility of influencing a situation by force. But it is not on today's agenda.

[Pushkov] On what do the talks hinge now? Could the map be revised?

[Churkin] There is the possibility of amendment, although it is extremely small. But the chief problem is the clash between the sides in the conceptual sphere. The Muslims and the Bosnian Government simply cannot give up their idea of Bosnia as a centralized state. The Vance-Owen plan, however, has Bosnia as a unified, but decentralized state.

The Serbs go to the other extreme: Apparently, they often think about breaking away from Bosnia, that is, they are challenging the idea of Bosnia as a unified state. If the sides were to abandon their extreme approaches,

many differences would vanish. Then it might be possible to reach an understanding on territorial differences too.

[Pushkov] You have had several meetings with Milosevic. Did you get the impression that he could influence Karadjic and the Bosnian Serbs' behavior in general?

[Churkin] President Milosevic certainly carries much weight among Serbs living not only in Serbia, but also in Bosnia and Croatia. He is able to influence the situation, but he cannot tell people what to do. The situation is much more complex.

At the same time, Milosevic's direct involvement in the talks is entirely justified. As the Geneva talks showed, he is capable of playing a constructive role. I believe Milosevic can play that role in relation to the map as well—although he himself stresses that he cannot get involved in the discussion of this matter, because it has to be decided by the people who actually live in Bosnia.

[Pushkov] The Yugoslav problem has an internal resonance for us. Do you not expect that now, following the congress, there will be a new—and probably more frenzied—offensive by the conservative majority in the Supreme Soviet against the Yugoslav aspect of Russian foreign policy?

[Churkin] It is a possibility. There are people in the opposition who have nothing to do with Yugoslavia. They will look for any excuse to whip up emotions. But I still hold that in the Supreme Soviet, even when our line is being criticized, most deputies really are worried about the situation and are trying to understand the problem. We certainly can find a common language with these people. Incidentally, the Foreign Ministry and Supreme Soviet have obviously come closer together of late on the Yugoslav question.

But it is very sad that Yugoslavia has become an object of domestic political struggle here. More than 100,000 people have now died there and there are hundreds of thousands of refugees... So if we are saying that we have historic links with Serbia and that we are not indifferent to the plight of the peoples of Yugoslavia, then we must stop the domestic political squabbles and get down to creating a settlement. And the main thing that enables us to play an active role in the settlement is the fact that we are acting in a nonconfrontational manner. If we were to go the way the opposition extremists are pushing us to go, we would automatically be completely barred from participating in the settlement. And even if we wanted to, we would no longer be able to help anyone, that is for sure.

[Pushkov] What in your view is the future for a Yugoslav settlement?

[Churkin] The adoption of the Vance-Owen plan, which we hope will happen, will be followed by the very difficult stage of its implementation. We are talking about the biggest peacekeeping operation in UN history, the presence of between 40,000 and 50,000 UN troops in Bosnia. They will have to take control of heavy weapons, disengage the sides, and so on.

The question is, how will the operation be carried out and who will participate in it? We (and our position is supported by a whole group of countries, for example, France) want it to be a UN operation. And the United Nations would not just be the "umbrella" for the conduct of the operation, but would have full control of it. Of course, certain infrastructure elements belonging to other organizations, for example, NATO, could be used. But, by and large, it must be a UN operation.

In accordance with the recently published Russian plan for a settlement, approved by the president, it is perfectly possible that a Russian contingent might participate in the operation. I think this is extremely important, even if it were a small contingent, comparable to our battalion in Croatia at the moment. It is a matter of confirming our role as a great state. If we want our voice to ring out loud and clear in the Balkans, we cannot avoid participating.

Eighth Congress of People's Deputies

Yeltsin Asks Council To Assess Congress, Propose Plan

LD1703140993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1340 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—Russia's President Boris Yeltsin has not yet drawn final conclusions on the results of the Eighth Congress of Russian People's Deputies. He said this while opening a session of the Presidential Council in the Kremlin today. In the president's words, "the congress dealt a heavy blow on the Constitution and on statehood." Boris Yeltsin called on members of the council to "give their assessment of the congress, to analyze tactical mistakes, if any, and most important of all, to propose a plan for actions in this most difficult situation."

The Presidential Council is a consultative body whose task is to draw up proposals on strategy in the sphere of home and foreign policy.

Members Favor Presidential Rule

LD1703155893

[Editorial report] Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian at 1525 GMT on 17 March broadcasts a telephone report from the Kremlin by correspondent Yuliy Semenov on the meeting of the Presidential Council.

Semenov says the meeting in still in progress. He cites Vyacheslav Kostikov, the president's press secretary, as saying that the Congress of People's Deputies is discredited and that Yeltsin's rating has gone up. Kostikov went on to say that "by its destructive actions the Congress has created, as far as the president is concerned, a moral-political situation that is similar to August 1991. Moreover, numerous members of the Presidential Council are in favor of the President turning to the people tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow, and are of the view that he has every reason to go for rather harsh measures. Some Presidential Council members who spoke here even proposed that presidential rule be introduced, being of the view that moral and constitutional grounds exist for this."

Semenov adds that he hopes to provide a fuller picture once the sitting is over.

Further on Council Reaction

LD1703164193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1555 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—Vyacheslav Kostikov, the head of state's press secretary, spoke to journalists about the meeting of the Presidential Council and said: "The members of the Presidential Council are unanimous in their assessment of the results of the Congress. They consider that the Congress, the Supreme Soviet, and its leadership have totally discredited themselves. Many members of the council do not agree that the president lost the Congress. His popularity is increasing. The Congress created for the president a moral and political situation of prestige and strength which is similar to that of August 1991."

The press secretary continued: "Many members of the Council consider that the president should take advantage of this situation and display his will, his strength, and his severity. Very many members of the Council consider that the president should tomorrow or the next day address the people and set out his position very precisely and clearly. He has all the moral grounds to proceed to very severe measures."

Vyacheslav Kostikov went on to say that many members of the Council "spoke in favor of introducing presidential rule, but there was no mention of a state of emergency. Many are inclined to the opinion that the president has every moral right, and constitutional right, to introduce presidential rule."

"The path of concessions and compromises is already exhausted," the press secretary said.

Council Condemns Congress Results

LD1703225393 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Following the Congress of People's Deputies, each of the sides is determining its tactics. Today was the first of three days that Boris Yeltsin has set aside to determine his position.

This morning, a meeting of the Security Council was held in the Kremlin. We have no detailed information about it. However, something said by Boris Yeltsin about the recent congress has become known. According to him, the congress dealt a big blow at Russia's statehood.

Today, too, the first meeting of the Presidential Council was held in Moscow.

[Correspondent Yevgeniy Fateyev] Today's Presidential Council, which gathered toward evening in St. Catherine's Hall at the Kremlin, could quite well be called the presidential duma. After recently being considerably revitalized by Boris Yeltsin, this think-tank, incorporating Russia's leading intellectual forces, as one might expect, was not convened today to consider anything frivolous. It was convened to ponder how to patch over the political breaches made by the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies.

The congress, the president noted, dealt a blow to the constitution and statehood of Russia. I have not yet reached my final conclusions, the president went on to

say. I have therefore not yet appeared on television. First, I would like to have the benefit of the views of the Presidential Council on what further action to take, what decision to reach, and what countermeasures to adopt—mild, moderate, or hardline. Whatever occurred afterwards took place behind closed doors. [Video shows Yeltsin addressing council.]

The first information to leak out came two hours later when presidential press secretary Vyacheslav Kostikov emerged from the meeting to meet journalists. He said that the members of the Presidential Council were agreed that Boris Yeltsin had by no means lost at the congress, emphasizing that his popularity rating has even been rising. Many considered that by its destructive actions the congress had created a moral and political situation for the president comparable to that existing in August 1991 during the attempted putsch, and the view was expressed that the president should take advantage of this and display political will, strength, and severity. According to the press secretary, most members of the Presidential council recommended that the president address the people tomorrow or the day after with a precise and clear explanation of his position. Many advocated the introduction of presidential rule in Russia. However, there was no talk in this connection of a state of emergency. [Video shows Kostikov addressing journalists.]

At the end of the meeting, Yegor Gaydar, member of the Presidential Council, refrained from comment, saying that all the questions now are for the president alone to answer. [Video shows Gaydar talking to journalists]

Council members Anatoliy Sobchak and Gavriil Popov, although not avoiding the journalists, answered all their questions in an extremely noncommittal way. From what they said one could understand that they convinced the president that the congress itself suffered the biggest defeat, showing yet again its bankruptcy and total indifference to the peoples of Russia. [Video shows Sobchak and Popov seated addressing journalists.]

[Begin Sobchak recording] In general, the Presidential Council was unanimous about the need to move from a course of continual disputes not just with the Congress but also with the Supreme Soviet and various other organizations to vigorous positive actions capable of improving the situation and preserving the state—and the president is indeed the guarantor and symbol of the state's unity—and preserving the positive things that have appeared in our lives during the process of carrying out reforms. What is most important is not to allow a return to the past and not to allow a halt to the reforms, because at present that would be like suicide. [Video shows Sobchak addressing journalists.] [end recording]

Yeltsin Compromise With Congress Not Possible

LD1803174493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1604 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tamara Ivanova]

[Text] Moscow, 18 Mar—Boris Yeltsin is now carefully weighing up all the "pros and cons" of the decisions that he intends to make in the coming days, since they are very responsible and very important to the destiny of Russia, Vyacheslav Kostikov, press secretary to the president of the Russian Federation, told journalists today after speaking at a meeting with the creative and scientific intelligentsia. "I think," he noted, "that compromise and dialogue with the Congress are no longer possible. Essentially, the president has only one interlocutor left—the people of Russia. And he will turn to it in the coming days."

Vyacheslav Kostikov pointed out that "it is necessary to wait a little longer to see what formula for emerging from the crisis the president will propose to the people of Russia." But, in his view, it is perfectly obvious that Boris Yeltsin will need the backing both of the people of Russia and of the intelligentsia.

According to him, a new Russian Constitution is to be the guarantor of the republic's democratic development. He stressed: "The president is in favor of the Constitution's being adopted as quickly as possible." He also said that Boris Yeltsin "will see to it that the constitution ensures the rights of the president as the guarantor of Russia's statehood, since both the historical experience of Russia and the national [natsionalnyy] charactor of the Russian people do, nevertheless, presuppose strong presidential rule." On the other hand, in his view, the constitution will enshrine precisely the counterweights which are needed by a democratic state and which will ensure the preservation of democracy in Russia.

Vyacheslav Kostikov announced that the president is ready to propose a mechanism for the adoption of the constitution. "He has several options, and I think the people of Russia will hear about them today or tomorrow," he said.

Yeltsin May Take 'More Resolute Steps'

OW1803173593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1723 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Vyacheslav Kostikov, presidential press secretary, has said that Boris Yeltsin does not regard the results of the Eighth Congress as his defeat. According to the press secretary, who attended a meeting of artistic and scientific intellectuals in support of the president in Moscow Thursday [18 March], Yeltsin thinks that the Congress and deputies have shown their true face and this is a positive result. "But I would say," Kostikov continued, "that the Congress shook the president out of a kind of lethargy."

Kostikov said that at the Wednesday's Presidential Council session he had seen the president as he had been in 1991. Now, Kostikov said, the president may take still more resolute steps than he did following the August 1991 coup.

At the session, Kostikov continued, the president heard various suggestions, some going as far as the introduction of presidential rule. "I cannot say what decision the president has made but I am sure he has," Kostikov emphasized.

Yeltsin Seen Maneuvering To 'Regain Initiative'

MK1803114893 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 Mar 93 p 1

[Vera Kuznetsova commentary under general headline: "Yeltsin Appeals to CIS Leaders—and to Russian Public, as Andrey Kozyrev Explains"]

[Text] The Russian president's appeal to the CIS heads of state has more to do with applied politics, rather than being a declarative document.

Following his loss of positions in the course of the Eighth Congress, Boris Yeltsin is seeking on one hand to reinforce his regional policy, and on the other, to shift the "center of influence" from Moscow as Russia's capital to Moscow as city- guarantor of the Commonwealth.

This move should above all stabilize the position of the executive structures not only in "sovietizing" Russia, but also in the former Soviet republics, where the relationships between parliament and president are similar to Russia's.

There are three factors, in Yeltsin's thinking, allowing him to regain the initiative at the moment of crisis in state power: a single security system, a coordinated foreign policy, and a unified credits and investment policy. The statement on coordinated policy within the CIS (at a time when Yeltsin needs international support) testifies to the Russian president's wish to show the G-7 countries before their next meeting that Yeltsin's problems are also the problems of other Commonwealth states.

By urging the speedier adoption of the CIS Charter, the Russian president is trying to change the status quo as established by the Russian parliament, which accused Yeltsin of causing the disintegration of the USSR. He brings the Interparliamentary Assembly headed by Khasbulatov into the "circle of responsibility" for the future of the CIS, at the same time depriving the speaker of the possibility of criticizing him for inaction and negativism. By talking about the principle of voluntary participation in the CIS structures that he indicates, moreover, the president reserves freedom of maneuver for himself without ultimately recording his aspiration to create a rigid center.

Kozyrev Says Congress 'Not a Defeat' for Yeltsin

LD1703140893 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1312 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Russian Federation Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev gave a news conference today at the press center of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Russian and foreign journalists. It was on the address by Russian Federation President Yeltsin to the heads of CIS states. After the minister acquainted those present with the content of the address he replied specifically to a question regarding Yeltsin's reaction to the defeat of his team and his government at the Congress of Russian People's Deputies and regarding today's session of the Russian Federation Security Council.

[Begin Kozyrev recording] First, I would like to say that the Congress was not a defeat for Yeltsin and his team, nor a defeat for the government. Political life today is not a football game, although it is sometimes compared to one, nor was the Congress some kind of duel where points are scored, although unfortunately there were indeed persons, political figures, and forces at the Congress who did try to use it to score points. It seems to me that the Congress demonstrated the hopelessness of such attempts. The people no longer want anything to do with politicking and, in our view, the reaction to the Congress that prevails in the country is that people are generally sick of these exercises in speech-making and of voting which, I would like to repeat, cannot solve the country's problems.

The president realizes the seriousness of the political challenge that was thrown down at the Congress.

If you recall, several months ago we spoke openly, and I, in particular, spoke even at the Supreme Soviet, about the presence of a revanchist threat. So this is nothing new. We are aware of it. At the same time, I would like to stress that the president is completely on top of the situation.

Today's Security Council session went according to plan. Several matters of the country's development were discussed at it, including the international situation. It is probably not my function to give any more details right now, but it was in a calm, businesslike, and confident manner that all matters were discussed within the framework of the continuing work under the president's leadership to intensify the reforms. We have no intention of renouncing this path. [end recording]

Expects Government Changes

LD1703161193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1507 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondents Boris Krivoshey, Sergey Staroselskiy and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Excerpts] Moscow, 17 Mar—[passage omitted] Kozyrev pointed out that society, and therefore the president, must assess very seriously and without any haste what has happened, take into account society's reaction, and then adopt appropriate decisions. The president is aware of the seriousness of the political challenge that was issued at the Congress. However, he is fully in control of the situation and is reacting to these events rationally and calmly, Andrey Kozyrev said.

There is absolutely no reason to think that Russia's external policy has been weakened by the Congress. It remains unchanged, firm, and assertive. Russia remains a reliable partner of other countries, the Russian minister said.

Answering a question about possible changes in the composition of the Cabinet of Ministers, Andrey Kozyrev said it is time for certain personnel changes in the government, but this is a prerogative of the prime minister and the president. "My arrival from Helsinki is not connected with it, but I must frankly say that I will not be really surprised or sorry if some changes are made," he said. [passage omitted]

Press Minister on Attempts To Subordinate Media

PM1703161593 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 17 Mar 93 p1

[Unattributed report: "Mikhail Fedotov: Attempts To Subordinate Mass Media Will Continue"]

[Text] The instructions issued by the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet included the elaboration and adoption of a decree on state television and radio broadcasting. The relevant document submitted to the Congress suggested subordinating the electronic mass media to the Supreme Soviet. Here is how Mikhail Fedotov, Russian minister of press and information, assesses the situation.

"In general I am opposed to state interference in the activity of the mass media. I am opposed to state organs violating the Constitution and violating the laws. Unfortunately, the draft which has been submitted is absolutely illiterate from the legal viewpoint and fanastically nihilistic with regard to the Constitution and the law. It is complete disregard for all norms existing in the state. Including norms of international law. There are certain commitments, in particular there is the resolution of the Council of Europe interparliamentary assembly on the question of relations between parliaments and the mass media. It was adopted back in 1984 and if we want to join the Council of Europe, and Russia has said we do, then we must observe that resolution.

"But I do not doubt that attempts to subordinate the mass media to particular power structures will continue.

"What is the likelihood that the Supreme Soviet will adopt this resolution? I think there is a likelihood, but only a small one. Since, I repeat, it is all absolutely illegal."

CP's Zyuganov Interviewed on Congress

PM1703180193 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 2

[Interview with G. Zyuganov, chairman of the Russian Federation Communist Party Central Executive Committee, by A. Frolov; place and date not given: "Death Throes"]

[Text] [Frolov] Gennadiy Andreyevich, you attended the Congress and, so far as I am aware, took an active part in analyzing the rapidly changing situation, promptly elaborating decisions, and coordinating the conduct of different factions and currents. What is your assessment of the nature of the actions of the opposition in general and the Communists in particular?

[Zyuganov] From the organizational viewpoint this Congress was a big step forward for the state-patriotic opposition. It was possible to organize effective coordination of actions among its different parts: deputies, street pickets, the press, expert consultant groups. Draft resolutions and analytical documents were prepared in advance on all questions on the agenda, and also in the event of various surprises. The opposition took part in the work of Congress commissions, making specific constructive proposals.

It is important to realize today that the clash at the Congress erupted not between reformers and conservatives or between democrats and Communists, but between destroyers and citizens of Russia. The struggle now crosses party and factional lines. In essence it was a confrontation between the party of betrayal and the party of people who care about the state. And during the many votes the electronic display panel invariably showed the following ratio: 150-200 votes for the former and 600-650 votes for the latter.

The party of betrayal had nothing left except lies, intrigues, threats, and the mass media that still obey it.

The party of people who care about the state is backed by the people's anguish over the humiliated homeland, stopped production lines and silent blast furnaces, ruined countryside, shattered science, and desecrated culture.

All sensible adherents of various political and socioeconomic doctrines realized that there were only two ways out of an increasingly threatening situation: the peaceful way out and the explosive way out.

A peaceful outcome is possible only if the policy of "shock therapy" is urgently replaced and a new government of national salvation and people's trust is formed, a government consisting of practical workers, professionals, and pragmatists, a government with broad powers that is under the control of the supreme legislature.

If everything is left as it is, an explosion is inevitable within the next five months, according to specialists'

assessments. Even dictatorship in the shape of direct presidential rule will be unable to prevent it. The present executive branch has no objective preconditions for establishing such dictatorship: neither the people's trust, nor a reliable system of repressive organs, nor the support of national capital. There is a handful of adventurists who are capable of nothing but plundering the country and turning it into a bloodbath.

They have already done quite a lot of work on using the new social and state institutions, the Congress included, to split society and destroy the homeland. Remember: So-called "glasnost" meant a shameless new monopoly on truth and an instrument of psychological warfare against our own people, "sovereignty" was turned into a battering ram to destroy the Union, and "radical reform" led to a catastrophic slump and shutdown in production.

Now yet another utterly false idea is being put forward—the "separation of powers" interpreted in a fantastically absurd and ignorant way: as the total independence of the executive branch from anything. Such a thing has never existed and will never exist anywhere. Everywhere there is subordination of branches of power and control by the legislature over the executive. State power, which has its source in a unified people, is also unified, but there is a separation of functions within it. Power cannot be "separated" without dividing and fragmenting the state itself.

Once again this is being done to the thunder of all sorts of "initiatives": "constitutional agreements," referendums, constituent assemblies... But all this is merely a blitz—a term from the practice of psychological warfare meaning the distraction of people from the most important thing. Which is, first, in the course of indiscriminate privatization to get land, factories, and plants in the resultant confusion into the hands of the criminal comprador bourgeoisie and, second, by means of agreements such as START II to destroy the country's nuclear missile shield, into whose creation one-third of national wealth has been invested. This is why there is a need for the Chubayses, Kozyrevs, Shumeykos, and all the "greenhorns" serving them.

[Frolov] At the Congress these "greenhorns" looked rather wan.

[Zyuganov] That's not surprising. The methods of unrealizable promises and deception are finished. Populism worked before, that that is an instrument of destruction. A creative policy requires developed national-state thinking, which they simply lack. The organizational helplessness was also revealed against this background. Even the well trained S. Shakhray essentially had nothing to say. It seemed to me that he spoke more out of duty than out of conviction. In general, the deputies heard not a single persuasive speech in defense of the regime. The mass media also looked very pale. There was biased editing of clips, important episodes were not mentioned, and there were attempts to revive political corpses. This will lead to nothing except further self-discredit.

The camp of the "democrats" is shrinking before our very eyes. An exodus has begun. For instance, remember the remark made to the president by V. Domnina, until recently a supporter of B. Yeltsin: "That is worse than irresponsible!"

Very true, because in fact provocation, blackmail, and intimidation are all that is left in the arsenal of the president's entourage. I was literally staggered when in the struggle for power B. Yeltsin proved ready to sacrifice Russia's integrity and state unity, began his unprincipled flirtation with the regions, and started trading federal powers for support of his antiparliamentary endeavors. To the credit of the republics' leaders, they are aware that no one can escape alone. It did not prove possible to repeat the "Novo-Ogarevo process."

Quite naturally, at the Congress various figures put forward in various forms essentially the same idea of a "pact of civil accord." Representatives of the Communist Party have already taken part in a number of "roundtables" on this topic, and we believe that the basic principles here should be simple and clear slogans: No to dictatorship and economic blackmail, yes to law, dialogue, and accord. A stable majority emerged at the Congress on this basis reflecting the people's vital interests. It is very encouraging that everybody gathered for consultations at critical moments: deputies, republic and soviet leaders, and heads of administrations.

In my view, at the present moment there is a need to create a broad coalition capable of morally and politically isolating any extremists, forming a government, and answering for it. This coalition would organically combine the principles of the united opposition—justice, popular spirit, a state approach, patriotism—with the values of political centralism, including pragmatism and commitment to dialogue and the law.

The Congress was a Congress of awakened people who found within themselves the courage to overcome their indecision and who realized the full extent of their responsibility. This is why the recent forum was the shortest but at the same time the most effective and fruitful. It was the first weighty victory for the party of people who care about the state.

This victory consists, first, in the fact that the Congress went to the defense of the constitution and restored its full operation. It demonstrated real commitment to democracy, unlike the inveterate "democrats," who are either unwilling or unable to live in accordance with the law.

[Frolov] The democratic press hastened to claim that, by repealing the decree of 12 December last year and restoring the constitutional system, the deputies totally

stripped B. Yeltsin of his powers as head of the executive. But it is well known that the Congress actually expanded the government's powers.

[Zyuganov] Of course, only the first step has been taken toward restoring the legislative branch's control over executive structures. It is a question of organizing cooperation and collaboration between the two branches of power. But it is precisely this that the president, who acts according to the "all or nothing" principle, cannot accept. This is what prompted his ignominious flight from the Congress.

On the other hand, the government, now that it has been vested with additional powers, must itself change both in its membership and in its attitude toward matters. I had the impression that V. Chernomyrdin too subscribes to this opinion. At the critical moment he did not quail and did not walk out of the hall. On the contrary, he thanked the Congress for granting the government additional powers. And I hope that his words about new, honest, decent, competent people will not remain mere talk.

[Frolov] Nevertheless, it is difficult to shake off the impression that the Congress and the president are paralyzed before each other in some kind of impotent balance. B. Yeltsin has clearly lost levers for effectively influencing the situation, but the Congress has not yet acquired them...

[Zyuganov] The Eighth Congress fulfilled its minimum program. The anticonstitutional "constitutional agreement" has been repealed, and attempts to continue to live not according to the law, but according to an agreement have been rejected. The preconditions for a way out of the impasse have been created. It is now for the Supreme Soviet and the Ninth Congress of People's Deputies to have their say, and we must begin right now to make thorough preparations for that Congress.

In my view, besides the question of forming a government of national salvation, the deputies must also firmly make up their minds in a whole series of spheres. There is the restoration of the single Union market and severed economic ties and the conclusion of an appropriate agreement among republics. There is a need to adopt a political decision deeming the Belovezhskaya agreement to be a blatant mistake. This step would open the way for the gradual restoration of Union statehood—on a new, equal basis, of course. Finally, the fact that Russia lacks a scientifically based concept of national-state interests and national-state security in both the political and the economic spheres is simply intolerable any longer.

[Frolov] It is clear that, without the participation of the country's largest party, the tasks you have listed cannot be solved. I personally greatly hope that the restored Communist Party will be the cementing force in a broad people's-patriotic movement.

[Zyuganov] The party will win prestige only through real action and by advancing new ideas. Much work lies ahead, primarily organizational work. In the month since the party congress we have managed to establish day-to-day links with all regional organizations and to restore executive structures from bottom to top.

We are proposing to solve a number of priority problems at the 20 March Central Executive Committee plenum. We will sum up the initial results of work and decide about the basic guidelines for all-Russian and regional policy.

At the same time local party organizations should not wait for special guidance on any question. The situation in the country is such that the immediate aims of activity are absolutely clear. There is extensive explanatory and propaganda work in the midst of people, in residential neighborhoods and labor collectives. And there is the organization of meetings with people's deputies about the results of the Eighth Congress.

We have information that, since they lost at the Congress, the right-wing radicals have decided to "stir up" Moscow, the Kuzbass, and Vorkuta. They have scheduled mass demonstrations in Moscow for 28 March. We must retain our composure, calm, and vigilance and not fall for any provocations.

Our attitude toward the plebiscite which the president will clearly attempt to impose on the country is also clear. It is an instrument not for social accord, but for a split. There is legitimate power in the country at the center and at local level. Namely the soviets. Communists must support them in all constructive steps and influence their activity via their deputies' factions and groups. And with regard to the plebiscite, there must be a total boycott on the organization of it, and also on turning up for it.

Several extremely important dates are coming up: 17 March, the second anniversary of the all-Union referendum, May day, and, of course, 9 May. We must mark them with mass actions: rallies, demonstrations, pickets, whatever we can manage.

But the main thing for us is routine daily work. Support for the opposition press and organizing the subscription campaign and alternative forms of distribution. Aid for the underprivileged, old people, disabled people, and large families. A great deal can also be done in the sphere of the economy. The obvious task here is to help the countryside carry out the spring sowing. But we must also look to the future and think about ways of implementing our main program demand—transferring state enterprises to the full economic possession of their labor collectives. In some places such experience is already being accumulated, in Chelyabinsk, for instance. We must make it a common asset.

Khasbulatov Warns of West's 'Directing Hand' in Russia

OW1703165193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1616 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Ruslan Khasbulatov said that the campaign against the government powers which was unleashed after the 8th Congress of People's Deputies is causing surprise and concern. He said it could be compared only with the campaign launched against Salvador Allende, which resulted in the dictator Pinochet's rise to power. At a meeting Wednesday [17 March] with the Supreme Soviet's Science Council, Khasbulatov stressed that the West's support for the executive branch gives the impression of "an experienced directing hand," which, he believes, was preparing the West's response to the Congress long before the Congress convened.

"The most significant falsehood" Khasbulatov called the fact that the people's deputies and parliament are now being portrayed as anti-reformers. Khasbulatov claimed that 1992, when Gaydar and Burbulis ruled government, was a year of lost opportunities. Now the government is, albeit timidly, trying to correct the situation," [no opening quotation marks as received] he said. The Congress, Khasbulatov believes, has strengthened the government's position. However, he stressed, instead of collaborating with the representative powers, the executive branch is issuing propaganda, which "is deadening the minds of citizens."

The parliament speaker said it is not right to consider the results of the Congress as one side's victory or the other side's defeat. It's just that good sense has now prevailed, he said. "If one takes that approach to the results of the Congress, then probably the president himself could be considered the victor—after all, he needs a country with good sense and sound deputies, who make well considered and responsible decisions to achieve peace and stability in society." Khasbulatov also feels that the Congress revealed the weaknesses in governing the country by both branches of power.

The parliament leader cited the need to strengthen vertical ties in both the representative and the executive powers. He also announced the Supreme Soviet's readiness to "adopt the most radical laws" to rapidly realize reforms.

Participating in the meeting were Director of the Economics Institute Leonid Abalkin, Director of the Institute for International Economic and Political Research Oleg Bogomolov, Vice President of the Academy of National Economy Pavel Bunin, Moscow State University department head Aleksey Yemelyanov, Director of the Institute of Europe Vitaliy Zhurkin, and other scholars. Also participating were Chairman of the Central Bank Viktor Gerashchenko, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium's Higher Economic Council Vladimir Ispravnikov, Civic Union leader Vasiliy Lipitskiy, and others.

Says 'Common Sense' Prevailed

LD1703172893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1635 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—"Common sense prevailed" at the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies, Ruslan Khasbulatov told scientists at the Russian parliament building today.

"If the situation is viewed from that angle, then, for sure, the president can also regard himself as a winner—and quite rightly," he said. The parliamentary speaker said "the Congress adopted balanced decisions aimed at achieving calm and stability in society."

Ruslan Khasbulatov noted that some areas of the mass media are trying to portray deputies "as enemies of reform." "An atmosphere is being whipped up around the Congress and the Supreme Soviet that is intended to suggest that these bodies hanker for a return to the Communist past and oppose reform," he said. Describing this as a "big lie," the chairman of the Supreme Soviet remarked that "we in parliament would now like to work in a constructive and businesslike fashion to ensure that definite successes, especially in the social sphere, are achieved by the next Congress."

Ruslan Khasbulatov stressed that "political stability could be quickly achieved if it were understood that the attempt to struggle against one branch of power is a struggle against the state itself."

Describing the year in which the Gaydar-Burbulis government, as he put it, was at the helm as a wasted one, the head of parliament said: "The government has now embarked—albeit timidly—on the positive road of correcting these major failures to some extent. It has been realized that certain methods and means have to be changed. We in parliament are finding a common language with the government."

People's Deputies Cited on Results

LD1703120193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1142 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—"The extraordinary Congress, the next in turn, produced a very depressing impression on me: It seemed to me that I found myself again in the almost forgotten atmosphere of a meeting of party and economic management activists of the late 70s and early 80s. The result was known beforehand: No referendum... Only now it is becoming clear why the pro-communist parliamentary bloc was clinging so frantically to every item of the Brezhnev constitution, patched up many times over. Each of them is a stronghold for their return to old ways." People's Deputy Vladimir Fomin said in an interview with LITERATURNAYA GAZETA, published today.

The newspaper carries a selection of interviews with people's deputies, in which they share their impressions of the Congress. In the opinion of Fedor Shelov-Kovedyayev, "the developments at the Congress will be followed by the disintegration of statehood, because it is clear: Neither the president, nor the government will reconcile themselves to the curbing of their authority and will act at their own discretion, and the parliament will cancel all their decrees and resolutions. This will create absolute chaos, anarchy and vacuum of power both in the centre and in provinces."

"The confrontation of the top leaders of the country reached a critical point," Akhsarbek Galazov believes. "Its consequences may destabilise the situation in society. I mean not only the economy. It may start a civil war."

Mikhail Fedotov said he felt duped at the Congress. "There was a lot of talk about consolidation and accord, but the results of the voting showed the opposite. The banning of the referendum means that the Congress put itself between the president and the nation. This stand is not exactly in line with the constitutional status of the Congress," Fedotov said.

Mikhail Bocharov said: "When the president left the conference hall as a sign of protest after seeing the results of the voting on his draft resolution, this did no credit to him. I have some grudges against the president even in connection with the Congress, although my attitude to it is negative in general. The higher is the post one is holding—the more particular he should be about sticking to the rules of ethics. This is also true of the chairman of parliament, who came up with a rather tactless speech on the second day of the Congress."

In the opinion of Aman Tuleyev, "by holding a referendum, we would only set some sections of the population against others... The root cause of the bankruptcy is not in the constitutional crisis, but in the reform course. The president should heed those who know better the situation in provinces."

According to Yevgeniy Ambartsumov, "the congress reflects people's feelings, even though in a distorted form. From this point of view it should not be underestimated. But it outlived itself as a parliamentary institution, because important problems cannot be discussed at a rally, in which more than one thousand people take part. It is necessary to continue the quest for agreement between the two branches of authority. There is no getting around it. The elimination of one or the other branch of authority will lead to chaos and the vacuum of power in general, which may be filled by any dangerous anti-democratic forces.

"Although the president's requests were not met, Yeltsin still has enough opportunities to discharge his duties within the framework of the constitution. We should start as soon as possible the creation of a normal two-chamber parliament, elected by direct vote without the Congress—an institution resembling a public meeting," Ambartsumov stressed.

More on Deputies' Opinions

MK1803080893 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No. 12, 21 Mar 93 (Signed to Press 16 Mar 93) p 8A

[Series of deputies' opinions on the congress: "If The Authorities Do Not Yield"]

[Text] The deputies' instinct for self-preservation together with the referendum have pushed the idea of early elections into the background for a time. The Supreme Soviet has been instructed to study the matter. By June it is to adopt amendments to the constitution. Judging by the arrangement of parliamentary forces, these amendments could not so much reform as conserve the present political system: The "implacable" opposition intends to preserve the congress as the supreme institution of state power. It appears that the "Elections, everyone!" slogan requires a degree of caution...

Leonid Volkov, "Radical Democrats" faction:

This was the congress of the elimination of the state in Russia. On Nikolay Ryabov's initiative it declared all, even the modest achievements of state building, nonexistent. It forgot that with the abolition of the CPSU and the KGB, Russian society needed a new power structure, that the impressive Constitutional Commission was set up for that purpose in 1990, not in 1992, and then the institution of the presidency was established. The congress pilloried presidential authority and shattered faith in the authority of the all-Russian state, going back to the days of feudal fragmentation. The confederalist pressure from the autonomous entities is frightening in that it tugs along in its wake the regions, oblasts, and krays in the vast Russian part of Russia.

What now, then? To all appearances, the president's administration is going to continue the technocratic line, trying not to think about the fact that it cannot have any political success without the mighty political theater among the grassroots and without the clear will of the authorities at the top. And the congress? Will it suffer the same fate as the French Congress [Konvent] or Stalin's "congress of victors"? Indeed, one democratic deputy told me with conviction: "The congress can decide anything." "Even to chop off someone's head?" "Yes!"

No wonder people are saying in response to the victory of the destroyers of Russian statehood: It's time the Russian regions thought about creating a new Republic of Russia, which, as part of the federation or outside it, could not be anything else but a great democratic power.

Ilya Konstantinov, "Rossiya" faction:

We are not abandoning the slogan of early elections for president and deputies. But the solution of the elections

question is not the solution of the power question. The power question will take years to resolve in Russia—I mean complete political stabilization.

Our main task today is organization of the opposition and self- organization. At the same time, we will work on changes in the law on elections and intend to insist on keeping the congress in the system of power.

Formerly we talked about a two-chamber parliament, but practice shows that the congress is still necessary—because we do not have a multiparty system yet. Because the Supreme Soviet has turned into a bureaucracy, so in this sense it is no different from a ministry. The congress, however, provides wider representation for the various political and social strata and is less dependent on the adoption of decisions.

Marina Salye, cochairman of the Free Democratic Party:

I am dead against the idea of early elections, because I have never considered that in a state things depended on people. It is the system that matters. In August 1991 the president should have raised the question of constituting a new state system by convening a constituent assembly. It would have happened then.

Early elections change nothing—the congress remains and the old constitution continues to operate along with this political system with its mutant two-headed parliament and two heads of state. In my view, the congress has destroyed one of them: the president. And what kind of president is he if he can be swept away at any moment? Article 104 of the Constitution continues to operate in full. There has been no division of power.

The democrats must now start from scratch. They have to appeal to the people, with whose help we managed to abolish Article 6 of the USSR Constitution not long ago. There were no other mechanisms at the time. Now Article 6 is incorporated in Article 104 of the Russian Federation Constitution. For a start, let us with the help of the people abolish this article and deprive the congress of its exclusive powers to adopt a new Russian constitution.

Vasiliy Lipitskiy, chairman of the "Civic Union" executive committee:

The congress demonstrated that temporary agreements and compromises do not make the situation any easier. Another 12 to 18 months of the current power vacuum or power struggle would have an extremely deleterious effect on the situation in the country. I cannot see any other way of solving the problem other than early elections. The best scenario would have been a referendum on the election question. But the congress went a different way, instructing the Supreme Soviet to make the relevant changes to the constitution. It will be hard and slow work because questions relating to the functioning of the institutions of power are dealt with by a variety of departments. But we have no choice, if we are going to stick to constitutional methods of action. So it is necessary to make every effort to accelerate the lawmaking process.

I do not rule out the possibility of amendments to the constitution being adopted at the June congress. Some might consider this unrealistic, but life is bringing many changes in people's thinking. Only two weeks ago it seemed inconceivable that it would even be discussed at the last congress.

There must be simultaneous elections for the body of deputies and the president. The chief objection is the vacuum in power that might result. I do not think there is anything to fear. The congress made one very positive step—it widened the powers of the government, which now increasingly has to take the initiative in economic activity. As for the political sphere, the vacuum is such that it really can no longer be made any worse.

Boris Nemtsov, governor of Nizhniy Novgorod:

I have always opposed a referendum, but the congress decided the matter in such a strident way that it is difficult to say whether the decision is a good thing or bad. The intensity of the political struggle has not waned and the threat of the country's disintegration, which the referendum promised, has increased even further. The congress made the confrontation between the Moscow authorities so bad that it generates an irresistible desire to cooperate with them as little as possible. For the leaders of the sovereign republics in the federation it is yet another chance to "enhance their sovereignty" or, to put it simply, an opportunity for separatism. That is, the exacerbation of the conflict between president and parliament could result in the very real breakup of the country.

Some people take delight in Khasbulatov's victory over the president. Formally he did indeed score a victory. But, to use the term chosen by the speaker himself, it was a Pyrrhic victory: The two state figures are not tailoring their political ambitions to the possible consequences of their confrontation.

There is no task more important for the country at the moment than that of curbing hyperinflation, which could lead to the most serious, including political, consequences. In that sense, the congress took a good step when it proposed bringing the State Bank chairman into the government and transferring the pension fund, with its vast resources, to the executive authorities. But I am afraid the passions that raged in the Grand Kremlin Palace will continue to distract the government from the most vital tasks for a long time yet and time will have been lost yet again.

National Salvation Front Will 'Protect Constitution'

PM1803140193 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 18 Mar 93 p 1

["National Salvation Front Political Council Statement"]

[Text] Immediately after the Eighth Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies there again issued from the president's entourage and with the aid of the mass media words abou the political harm allegedly caused by the congress to the Russian Federation constitutional system and appeals to oppose these decisions by all available means.

The National Salvation Front announces its readiness to counter the anticonstitutional actions of the president and all his power structures with appropriate steps to defend the Russian Federation Constitution.

The National Salvation Front warns all representatives of the power structures of their personal responsibility for illegal actions against their people.

Social Democrats Urge Uniting of Democratic Forces

OW1703191593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1711 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Social Democratic Center's (RSDC) Council has called for the democratic movements in the country to consolidate their forces without delay in defense of the constitutional system. A statement expressed concern over the increasing threat to reforms after the 8th Congress of People's Deputies.

The RSDC Council has declared its support for the presidential system of power, saying "this is the counterbalance to pro-communist forces." The RSDC is, however, firmly opposed to the establishment in the country of any kind of authoritarian regime. Settling disputes, it said, is possible only by constitutional means based on "sensible compromises between all branches of power."

Congress Results Remain 'Focus of Attention'

LD1703221093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2142 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—The results of the Eighth Extraordinary Congress of Russian People's Deputies remain the focus of attention of political life in the Russian Federation. President Boris Yeltsin has not yet made final conclusions on the results of the congress. However, as he said Wednesday opening a meeting of the Presidential Council, the "congress has struck a strong blow at the Constitution and statehood" of Russia.

"Since early February the president has begun implementing a goal-oriented programme of action" so that the Eighth Congress of Russian People's Deputies passed in a constructive manner. But his constructive initiatives were simply left without discussing and voting at the congress. As a result, the president's opponents managed to impose the decisions which were adopted by the congress," Sergey Shakhray, Russian vice-premier, said in an interview with the "ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI" newspaper.

Practically all political forces of Russia have already formed their views on the results of the congress. There are mainly diametrically opposed views, either rejecting or unconditionally accepting its decisions. For instance, the Social-Democratic Party of Russia comes out against introducing presidential rule in the country and for forming the government of people's confidence, Igor Averkiyev, acting chairman of this party, said on Wednesday. Leaders of the Social-Democratic Party of Russia think that many political forces are trying again to make the people face the choice—Boris Yeltsin or Ruslan Khasbulatov, the president or the congress. The Social-Democratic Party believes that only developed institutions of civic society may be the guarantor of democracy in the country.

Wednesday's open meeting of the parliamentary coalition of reforms demonstrated differences in the evaluation of the results of the Eighth Congress of Russian People's Deputies. Yuriy Nesterov, coordinator of the faction "Accord for Progress", noted that he considers the opinion on the "anti-constitutional coup" which allegedly occurred at the Eighth Congress, to be erroneous.

Reports in some Russian and foreign news media provoke President Boris Yeltsin to make hard decisions in the after-the-congress period. This reproach was expressed on Wednesday by representatives of the bloc of deputies' factions the "Democratic Center" during a meeting with journalists at the Russian White House. This bloc includes factions the "Left Center-Cooperation", "Free Russia" and "Sovereignty and Equality".

Tatarstan President Assesses Congress

LD1703164493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1103 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Sorokin]

[Text] Kazan, 17 Mar—The tension has not been relieved, but, rather, it has even increased—this is how Mintimer Shaymiyev, president of Tatarstan, commented on the results of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies of Russia in an interview to the newspaper SOVETSKAYA TATARIA.

According to him, the council of heads of the republics offered to elaborate a mechanism for implementing the federative treaty, but the congress rejected this offer. The

president of Tatarstan believes that as a result the controversies between the regions and the federal organs were not eliminated. If they grow into a conflict, its consequences will be much more serious "than the Moscow one."

The president of Tatarstan believes that the president, and the leaders of the parliament and the government should heed the opinion of the heads of the regions, because it expresses the interests of the peoples. In Mintimer Shaymiyev's opinion, having the support of the regions could reduce the pressure of various parties and movements on the Russian leadership.

Chita Party Meeting Urges Disbanding Congress

OW1803005993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1433 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Chita regional coordinating council of the Democratic Russia Movement at its last meeting described the Congress of People's Deputies as "reactionary and aimed at slowing down the reforms and bringing back the totalitarian communist regime." The meeting, which was also attended by representatives from Russia's Democratic and Republican Parties, and from the local Cossacks, demanded that the President organize a nationwide collection of signatures in favor of the disbandment of the Congress of People's Deputies and the convocation of a constituent assembly for the adoption of a new constitution. The meeting also demanded that the Supreme Soviet call a referendum on private landownership. The meeting voted for the dissolution of the regional council of people's deputies "for its antireformist agrarian policy."

Sakhalin Miners Invite 'Decisive Measures'

OW1803011693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1433 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The regional independent Sakhalin Miners' Union has appealed to Russian President Boris Yeltsin to take decisive measures to stabilize the economic and political situation in Russia. An address by the union pointed out that the 8th Congress of Russian People's Deputies had "confirmed worst expectations" and that "the verdict that it would be unnecessary to hold a referendum" had been reached in the nation in response to the concessions to the congress and to parliament.

The statement by the miners' union recognized, however, that the current constitution "permitted neither legislative nor executive power to function normally."

The Sakhalin miners have assured the president that they would support measures adopted by him "by any means available."

Democratic Forces Call For Dissolving Congress

MK1703145093 Moscow KURANTY in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Tomorrow Will Be Too Late"]

[Text] The headquarters of the Russian democratic forces has issued an appeal to the voters and the president of Russia. It says that the Congress of People's Deputies has grossly rejected all proposals from the democratic forces and president of Russia on stabilizing the situation and attaining accord. The Congress has actually usurped all power in the country. The tyranny of the communist nomenklatura continues. Economic reforms cannot proceed in such conditions.

We, the statement goes on, do not recognize the undemocratic decision of the Congress and declare our opposition to its communist ruling majority. We share the responsibility assumed by the president for holding a nationwide referendum. Today this is the sole and last legitimate means to resolve the conflict and prevent chaos and civil war.

The citizens of Russia must support the institution of the Russian presidency, established by the will of the people, and support the first popularly elected president, who is the main guarantor of democracy and order in Russia and of the prevention of a mafia-communist dictatorship. The authors of the appeal call on the people to support the referendum and through the referendum to strip the Congress of People's Deputes of its anti-people "powers."

Kuzbass Committees Condemn Congress 'Coup'

LD1703234593 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] A communist constitutional coup took place at the recent Congress of People's Deputies of Russia. This is claimed in a statement distributed today by the council of the workers' committees of the Kuzbass. The council called on the president to give his assessment of the political situation in the country and to announce in the mass media his plans for future actions as head of state.

Economic Freedom Party Seeks To Outlaw Congress

OW1803003693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1432 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Konstantin Borovoy, co-chairman of Russia's Economic Freedom Party told a news conference in Moscow on Wednesday [17 March] that his party and St. Petersburg's Public Committee for Russian Reforms were going to appeal to the Constitutional Court to declare the Congress of People's Deputies an unconstitutional structure which had to be disbanded.

He said the congress, by extending its competence to everything, violated the separation of powers principle.

On Tuesday, the Economic Freedom Party published a statement accusing the congress of trying to obstruct the reform policy of the President and government and thwart the adoption of a new constitution. Besides, by calling off the referendum scheduled for April 11, the congress deprived Russian citizens of one of their constitutional rights, the document says.

The congress's decisions, the statement continues, have put the country on the brink of direct political confrontation, and possibly civil war. "The reactionary majority of the congress has effectively carried out a coup d'etat," the document sums up.

The Economic Freedom Party has called on Russia's citizens to declare a general warning strike in defense of their civil and political rights and freedoms.

Concerning the possibility of presidential rule being introduced in Russia, Borovoy said at the news conference that his party would "give support to any constructive initiatives of the President if it is in line with the law." Svyatoslav Fedorov, the party's other co-chairman, condemned what he called "adventurist steps, posing danger to democracy."

'Reforms Coalition' Discusses Eighth Congress

LD1803032493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1648 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Filippov]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—Today's open meeting of the Parliamentary Reforms Coalition revealed a difference of opinion in the assessment of the results of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies. The people's deputies at the meeting did not support a proposed statement which contained an extremely negative assessment of the decisions of the Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation and called for a suspension of its work.

Yuriy Nesterov, coordinator of the "Accord for the Sake of Progress" faction, who spoke at the meeting, described as erroneous the judgment that an "unconstitutional coup" had allegedly taken place at the Congress. Deputy Anatoliy Bugrimov, spokesman for the "Radical Democrats" faction, addressing the authors of the document, said that it was "most shortsighted to palm off on the president explosive recipes for dissolving the congress on behalf of the Parliamentary Reforms Coalition."

As a result a drafting commission was set up with instructions to finalize an address, withdrawing the most radical judgments and assessments from it.

'Democratic Center' Spokesmen Discuss Congress

PM1803121793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 Mar 93 Single Edition p 1

[Aleksandr Linkov report under the rubric "In Parliamentary Factions": "There Are No Victors or Vanquished. There Is Only the Constitution"]

[Text] At a meeting with journalists held at the White House yesterday coordinators of parliamentary factions belonging to the "Democratic Center" bloc—V. Novikov, I. Vinogradova, U. Temirov, V. Vitebskiy, and A. Adrov—summed up the results of the extraordinary Eighth Congress of People's Deputies.

In I. Vinogradova's opinion, the head-on question "Who won: the president or the Congress?" so actively discussed in the mass media should not now be posed. There are no victors or vanquished. The main result is that the outcome achieved was that all questions were resolved on a constitutional basis. The actions of the top leadership should be limited precisely by the framework of the Basic Law, and not by revolutionary fits and starts.

However, Deputy A. Adrov remarked, there is one group of vanquished. That is the Russian president's apparatus, which has lost its influence on the government. Having received the possibility of initiating legislation, the government can now directly participate in parliament, and this will undoubtedly facilitate the adoption of the necessary normative acts.

Meeting participants consider that the decree adopted by the Congress in no way encroaches on the rights of the Russian president, but only compels him to make his own decisions more clearly in line with the Constitution. At the same time the deputies showed that they will not allow the establishment of any kind of diktat, no matter from where the threat stems.

Participants in the meeting expressed a negative attitude to the idea of early elections. The absence of a legislative basis and the small number of political parties and social movements would not enable any qualitative changes to be made in the deputies' corps. Nevertheless, if as a result of political intrigues the deadlock situation is exacerbated, it will be necessary to contemplate this extreme measure.

As for the referendum, participants gave a reminder that it is being called off only in April. And in the course of three months parliament, the Russian president, and the Constitutional Court are to agree questions on the fundamentals of the new Constitution and determine when they are to be submitted for discussion. As for the plebiscite projected by the president, in the words of V. Novikov, in the absence of any laws on it, it is not hard to guess even now what answers its supporters will "organize" or toward what they might push people. But will this be to the benefit of all of us?

Justice Minister's Congress Speech Cited

MK1703115693 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 1

[Abbreviated account of Justice Minister Nikolay Fedorov's Speech at Eighth Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies, with Vadim Poegli introduction: "Ruslan Imranovich, Why Do You Have Such Long Arms? Ten Uncomfortable Minutes in Deputies' Life"; first four paragraphs are Poegli introduction]

[Text] The most law-abiding people in this country are the deputies. Whatever the president proposes to them, they say: "Let us live according to the Constitution." However, this phrase has long lost any meaning with them.

This must be why the deputies got so jittery when Russian Justice Minister Nikolay Fedorov wanted to tell them at the Congress how they themselves were observing the Fundamental Law. The deputies even gave him only 10 minutes for his presentation, although Fedorov had asked for 20. "Caesar's wife is above suspicion." Even if this suspicion comes from a justice minister.

When Fedorov read out his report, however, all hell broke loose. The parliament speaker even remembered it at the end of the Congress and decided to instruct the Supreme Soviet to deal with the report and the minister concerned.

Since Fedorov's report was presented at the Congress in abridged form, we have decided to publish its text (allowing ourselves to cut out logical connectives, but preserving the facts)—so that our readers have a clear understanding as to with what and with whom the Supreme Soviet is going to "deal." [Poegli ends]

1. The Declaration on State Sovereignty of the Russian Federation has proclaimed as the most important principle of Russia's functioning as a law-governed state the separation of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers.

However, the real processes show that even these albeit imperfect boundaries between the branches cannot be maintained. The examples that could be cited may look like individual instances, but alas, taken together, they testify to profound and unstable trends—a political line running counter to the principles of constitutional legality.

2. One manifestation of the said trend is the blurring of boundaries between the legislative and executive structures. One after another structures and agencies are springing up under the Supreme Soviet that perform purely executive and administrative functions.

Suffice it to mention the Federal Property Fund, the Goskomstat [State Committee for Statistics], the Pensions Fund, a variety of banks, extra-budgetary funds, and so forth.

The Supreme Soviet is taking charge of economic tasks, grossly breaching the law and unashamedly intruding into the government's area of jurisdiction. Let me mention just a few acts that speak for themselves: "On Measures To Ensure Supplies of Products (Goods) to Regions in the Far North and Related Areas" and "On Urgent Measures To Make Preparations for the Spring Sowing Campaign of 1993."

The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet is committing numerous violations of the Russian Federation Constitution in its direct lawmaking activity.

From November 1991 through 6 March 1993, 211 laws came to the Russian president from the Russian Supreme Soviet for signature.

The Russian president has returned laws to the Supreme Soviet for reconsideration on 40 occasions. Out of these:

—twenty-six laws were substantially reworked by the Supreme Soviet;

—three laws were adopted incorporating the president's observations in new versions;

—one law was totally rejected for enactment;

—only in five instances in the course of further consideration were laws adopted by the Supreme Soviet without alterations in their original wording, with one of them subsequently ruled by the Russian Constitutional Court as not according with the Constitution, while during the repeat adoption of another, although its text was not altered, the president's comments and suggestions were recognized as justified in a Supreme Soviet decree;

—five laws have not yet received further consideration.

The above facts suggest that the Russian Supreme Soviet systematically adopts laws directly contradicting the Russian Federation Constitution—a circumstance which it has recognized in the majority of cases by submitting, in the course of further consideration, amendments as proposed by the Russian president.

3. It needs to be openly recognized that one of the factors in the constitutional crisis is the appearance of yet another power decisionmaking center not provided for by the Constitution.

I am talking about the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Presidium. Analysis of the acts adopted shows that the Presidium quite often goes outside the boundaries of its constitutional powers as a parliamentary working body, which results to a certain extent in its replacing the Supreme Soviet and the government.

The Supreme Soviet Presidium is making decisions on reimbursing the Industry and Nuclear Power Engineering Ministries for Russian Federation republican

budget debts and on providing priority banking services to enterprises in the nuclear energy sector of the Nuclear Industry Ministry.

The same pattern was followed in making decisions on allocating resources (15 April 1992), on concessions in repaying credits (22 June 1992), and so forth.

It remains a mystery on what authority the Supreme Soviet Presidium has made such decisions as "On the Socioeconomic Situation in the Republic of Buryatia," "On Priorities in the Military Policy of the Russian Federation, "On the Imperial Orthodox Society of Palestine," and many others.

Regardless of the driving motives, this "sovietization" of the administration process carries a destructive charge, as was graphically demonstrated by years of such practices.

It is hard to understand which is stronger here: misunderstanding of the meaning of the separation of powers, or a desire to turn the Presidium into yet another government.

4. Against this backdrop, the transformation of the post of Supreme Soviet chairman is no longer surprising. The constitutional figure of the organizer of parliamentary work has been arbitrarily turned into a parallel center of executive power.

Who do you think makes decisions (I quote): on providing state support and financing to the Russian Federation Technological Sciences Academy, or on authorizing long-term leasing of land plots in the customs zone of Leningrad Oblast? This is directly contained in corresponding personal orders by the Supreme Soviet chairman (Order No.3476/1 of 8 September 1992; Order No.2828/1 of 23 May 1992).

The Supreme Soviet chairman allows himself to make decisions as though he were a supreme official with unlimited powers. Under his order, the Justice Ministry was instructed to register the charter of the All-Russia Copyright Agency, which was established contrary to the law. It is well known how that matter ended. The Justice Ministry did not register that document and a Constitutional Court ruling restored legality—however, the Constitutional Court did not say anything about the illegal order of the Supreme Soviet chairman. Why? Just in case—given the omnipotence of the Soviets?

It is no longer surprising that the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet fund for social support to the population has been set up. Bypassing parliamentary controls, funds are being used at the personal discretion of the Supreme Soviet chairman.

Under a personal order from the chairman, 10 million rubles [R] from the foundation's resources—far from personal—was allocated to one beneficiary, and R20 million to another. Why these particular groups have been chosen, apparently, only the chairman knows.

5. Another intractable problem is the merging of deputies and administrative personnel. Let us take as an example the Foundation for the Social Revival of Russia (Vozrozhdeniye) that was set up and registered following a Supreme Soviet Presidium decision. It is actively creating entrepreneurial and commercial organizations, acquiring incomplete construction projects, making real estate transactions, and so forth. Naturally, fairly complex relationships are emerging—they are bound to emerge—with executive power bodies, including those with oversight functions.

We can well imagine the ease with which the Internal Affairs Ministry, the Security Ministry, the Prosecutor's Office, and the Tax Service can find appropriate bodies to perform oversight functions, given that there are over ten heads of Supreme Soviet committees and commissions on their boards—and what people they are! Here are just a few names: Ryabov, Yeremin, Zhukov, Ispravnikov, Aslakhanov, Stepashin, Shorin.

The Supreme Soviet should decide in principle what the deputies should engage in—political activity for the benefit of Russia or personal commercial activity.

6. The Supreme Soviet, ignoring its own law "On the Foundations of the Budget System and Budgetary Process in the RSFSR," adopts decisions that are in fact not covered by anything, reassigning this part of its duty directly to the government.

7. No one doubts the Supreme Soviet's right to determine priorities in lawmaking activity, but it should be stated openly that the separation of the deputy corps from the government in this sphere is leading to chaotic activity. As a result, we have an erratic assortment of new laws. Overall, more than 600 acts have been passed by the new Supreme Soviet. They are all highly contradictory, however, and this is causing many additional problems in life. At the same time extremely important bills on government service, on entrepreneurial activity, on fighting corruption, and on auditing are being shelved for months.

8. This subject could be continued. The Supreme Soviet cannot find the time to consider the draft Penal Code submitted by the president, the law on legal defense for Russian citizens, and dozens of other presidential legislative motions. However, possibilities are being found to unsystematically patch up the old Penal Code and grant sweeping amnesties, as a result of which in 1992 alone at the will of the Russian Supreme Soviet approximately 400,000 people were exempted from criminal liability. (By way of comparison, there are some 450,000 people in penal and corrective institutions overall at present).

9. The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet by its decree of 5 March 1993 included in the agenda of the Extraordinary Eighth Congress of Russian People's Deputies the question of the observance of the Constitution by supreme state bodies of power and officials. And the Congress reaffirmed that question on 10 March 1993.

Here the following should be noted from a constitutional and legal point of view:

A. The list of the Congress' powers does not include the function of verifying the observance of the Russian Federation Constitution by supreme state power bodies and officials;

B. The RSFSR Law "On the RSFSR Constitutional Court" establishes that "in line with the principles of the separation of powers, constitutional oversight shall be placed under the jurisdiction of the judicial branch as the most impartial and independent branch."

The supreme body of constitutional oversight in the country is the Russian Federation Constitutional Court. It alone (and no other state body) may conduct, within the bounds of strictly regulated legal procedures (Constitutional Court proceedings), examination of the observance of the Constitution by supreme bodies of power and officials.

In adopting the above decree of 5 March 1993 and thus prompting the Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies to exceed the bounds of its jurisdiction and to appropriate the prerogative of the judicial branch, the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet has patently acted contrary to law.

Examples of gross violation of the Russian Constitution and intrusion into the exclusive jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court on the part of the Congress are the adoption at the previous Congress of paragraph 19, Article 109 insofar as it provides for automatic suspension by the Supreme Soviet of presidential edicts and ordinances by means of merely appealing to the Constitutional Court, and also Article 121/6 with respect to the immediate termination of presidential powers without any participation at all by the Constitutional Court.

The question is not about whether or not the Congress and the Supreme Soviet are acting expediently.

Democracy, law, and justice exist not where the minority can be suppressed and its property divided, but where the minority is protected from the arbitrariness of the majority. Power here must belong to the court, and not to the majority—even at the Congress—otherwise Russia will never have either constitutional order or justice, as a legal value.

Decree Scrapping 7th Congress Pact Published

PM1703122793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Decree No. 4626-1 of the Russian Federation Congress of People's Deputies "On Measures To Implement Constitutional Reform in the Russian Federation (On the Decree of the Seventh Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies 'On Stabilizing the Russian Federation Constitutional System')," dated Moscow, the Kremlin, 12 March 1993 and signed by Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Chairman R.I. Khasbulatov]

[Text] Confirming the need to stabilize the Russian Federation constitutional system and the significance of efforts by the Seventh Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies in this area, and on the basis of the need to preserve civil peace and consensus in society as well as the statehood and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation, and taking into account the complexity of the current Russian socioeconomic and political situation, and bearing in mind the initiatives made by the Russian Federation president, the components of the Russian Federation, and Russian Federation people's deputies, the Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies decrees:

1. That constitutional reform be implemented according to the procedure established by the Russian Federation Constitution. That agreements and other normative acts of state organs and officials designed to redistribute powers between the federal organs of state power and the organs of power of the components of the Russian Federation which do not conform to the Russian Federation Constitution and the Federation Treaty be deemed invalid.

2. That it be recognized that the decrees of the Seventh Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies "On Stabilizing the Russian Federation Constitutional System" and "On the Interpretation of Certain Provisions of the Decree of the Seventh Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies 'On Stabilizing the Russian Federation Constitutional System'" are no longer valid.

3. That the Russian Federation president, the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, and the Constitutional Commission are to agree among themselves within three months on a draft of the basic provisions of the new Russian Federation Constitution which they are then to send to the components of the Russian Federation for agreement. The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet is to formulate a procedure for agreeing the drafts of legislative acts with the components of the Russian Federation.

The contents of the Federation Treaty are to be included in the draft of the new Russian Federation Constitution.

4. That issues relating to the day-to-day administration of federal state property, federal economic services, and the formulation, coordination, and implementation of anticrisis programs in the sphere of the economic and social development of the Russian Federation be concentrated under the control of the Russian Federation Council of Ministers-Government.

That the chairmen of the Central Bank of Russia, the Russian Federal Property Fund, the Pension Fund, and the Russian Federation State Committee for Statistics may join the Russian Federation Council of Ministers-Government ex officio while remaining under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet.

That it be established that decisions made by the Russian Federation president and the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet which require financing from the Russian Federation state budget and federal nonbudget funds are to be made taking the Russian Federation Government's conclusions into account.

5. That the systematic reform of federal relations and the implementation of the Federation Treaty be regarded as the paramount task of strengthening Russian statehood.

6. That the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet must:

formulate and approve a procedure for taking account of proposals by components of the Russian Federation on the draft of the new Russian Federation Constitution, and also a legal mechanism for implementing the provisions of the Federation Treaty. To prepare the appropriate draft laws, a commission comprising Russian Federation people's deputies and plenipotentiary representatives of federal organs of executive power and the representative and executive authorities of the Russian Federation constituent republics, krays, oblasts, the autonomous oblast, autonomous okrugs, and cities of federal significance is to be formed;

With the Russian Federation Council of Ministers-Government, formulate a mechanism for coordinating financial and credit policy and the administration of the Russian Federation Central Bank;

Formulate and adopt federal legislative acts on the election of the Russian Federation president, on the election of Russian Federation people's deputies, on political parties, on state television and radio broadcasting, on a universal vote (referendum) and discussion of the most important issues of state life.

7. Articles 109, 110, and 121-6 of the Russian Federation Constitution are to come into force with full effect from the moment the present decree is adopted.

8. The present decree is to come into force from the moment it is adopted. [Signed] Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Chairman R.I. Khasbulatov
Moscow, the Kremlin
12 March 1993
No. 4626-1

More on Decree

PM1703124993 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report: "From the Central Commission for the All-Russian Referendum"]

[Text] The Central Commission for the All-Russian Referendum has taken note of the fact that by a decree of the Eighth Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies, the decree of the Seventh Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies "On the Stabilization of the Russian Federation Constitutional System" which envisaged the holding of an all-Russian referendum 11 April, has lost its validity.

Text of Referenda Decree

PM1803125193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 Mar 93 Single Edition p 1

["Decree of the Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies on an All-Russia Referendum," signed by R.I. Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, in Moscow, 13 March 1993]

[Text] Having examined the Russian Federation president's proposals on holding an all-Russia referendum 11 April 1993; taking cognizance of the decree of the Eighth (Extraordinary) Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies "On Measures for Implementing Constitutional Reform in the Russian Federation (On the Decree of the Eighth Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies 'On Stabilizing the Constitutional Order of the Russian Federation')," and the appeal to the Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies from leaders of the representative and executive organs of power of subjects of the Russian Federation; taking cognizance of the fact that holding all-Russia referenda at the present time could entail dangerous consequences for the state and the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation; and in view of the imperfection of the legislative basis for holding all-Russia referenda, the ambiguity in the juridical interpretation of its [as published] results, and the Russian Federation president's lack of a constitutional right to designate a referendum, the Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies resolves:

1. To deem the holding of an all-Russia referendum at the present time inexpedient.

To examine the question of the date for holding an all-Russia referendum on the basic provisions of the draft of the new Russian Federation Constitution after the fulfillment of clause 3 of the Decree of the Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies "On Measures for Implementing Constitutional Reform in the Russian Federation (On the Decree of the Seventh Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies 'On Stabilizing the Constitutional Order of the Russian Federation')."

2. The 20 billion rubles allocated to hold the all-Russia referendum 11 April 1993 is to be channeled into funding the construction of housing for servicemen in addition to the sums provided for in the Russian Federation republic budget for 1993.

[Signed] R.I. Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet
Moscow, the Kremlin
13 March 1993
No. 4629-1

Congress Drives Yeltsin to 'Incisive' Action

PM1803111193 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 4

[Valeriy Vyzhutovich article, citing Anatoliy Sliva, deputy chief of the Russian President's State Legal Administration: "Congress Has Effectively Deprived the President of All His Powers, According to State Legal Administration Leader"]

[Text] There is no precedent in Russian history for what happened at the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies: A coup d'etat was carried out within the framework of formal legality—"in accordance with the procedure established by the Russian Federation Constitution," as the Congress decree has it.

The Russian Communist Party (its deputies worked hard at the microphones and at political lobbying in the corridors) can now, without fear of waiving principles, enrich Bolshevik teaching on the seizure of power with bloodless, even civilized, as it were, experience. There was no armed revolt or other revolutionary throwbacks in the shape of the arrest of the government, the seizure of the post and telegraph offices, and so forth. But the result was identical: All power to the Soviets!

What we have here is dictatorship within the law. How else, for example, can you describe a situation where, by pressing a voting button, all power in the country is seized by one person—the head of parliament—and the president is deprived of virtually all his powers and the people of the right to express their will?

But it is perhaps difficult for ordinary citizens, the voters on whose behalf Russian deputies so love to speak, to get to the bottom of the Congress documents. Their outward observance of the proprieties, their conventional style, and their zealous appeals to the patched-up Constitution, which latter would confound the devil himself, can obscure what happened. Therefore, let us simply ask: Of what powers has the president been deprived? And what powers has the Supreme Soviet correspondingly acquired?

The editorial office put these questions to Anatoliy Sliva, deputy chief of the Russian President's State Legal Administration. His commentary was as follows:.

"Let us start with the cancelling of the referendum. Yes, the right to call a referendum does not belong to the president—it is the prerogative of the Congress. Moreover, there is no explicit reference to the cancellation of the referendum. But it is nullified by the second paragraph in the Congress decree whereby the December agreement, which envisages a plebiscite, becomes null and void. Direct harm is caused the president here, however, by the upsetting of the balance of power established by the December 'peace pact.' The indirect harm caused is also obvious: The people, on whose support Yeltsin has counted, have been denied the right to a referendum."

But the chief presidential losses are enumerated by the seventh paragraph of the decree: "Articles 109, 110, and 121-6 are to be fully enacted...."

Article 109 speaks of the right of the Supreme Soviet to suspend the operation of presidential edicts and directives pending their examination in the Constitutional Court. Commenting on this paragraph, Sliva said: "Paragraph 19 of that article is at variance with Article 165-1, where it is stated that the Constitutional Court resolves cases on the constitutionality of presidential edicts and directives. Thus parliament is not entitled to suspend the operation of any presidential acts whatsoever until the Constitutional Court has confirmed or contested their legality. And if you bear in mind that examination of cases in the Constitutional Court takes weeks and sometimes months, virtually any edict or directive of the head of state could be frozen for a long period. And that, despite our mercurial political situation which demands prompt decisions! To say nothing of the fact that our president has been deprived of the right to dissolve parliament to resolve the crisis of power, a right which, say, the president of France and the prime minister of Britain possess."

As for Article 101, the amendment to it vesting the government with the right of legislative initiative, which was frozen in December, has entered into force. Previously, within the structures of executive authority only the president could initiate legislation. The extension of this right to the government could, in Sliva's opinion, complicate the president's relationship with the cabinet during the transitional period, which demands maximum coordinated action: "Imagine, the Council of Ministers submits a draft law to parliament. There it is worked up by deputies according to their own political likes and ideas. You now have the law. On discovering deviations from the Constitution in it the president will be forced to pursue an action in the Constitutional Court. Against whom? Against his own government!"

Incidentally, the strengthening of Chernomyrdin's position, which is regarded by some observers as the sole positive outcome of the Congress, is imaginary. The president insisted that the Central Bank, the Russian Federal Property Fund, the Pension Fund, and the State Statistics Committee be transferred to the jurisdiction of the cabinet. But what eventuated is that the leaders of those subunits "can become ex officio members of the Council of Ministers—the government—while remaining under the control of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet." The same tight rein, the same strict dependency on the legislators, whose appetite for power is now insatiable.

Finally, Article 121-6 envisages the immediate cessation of presidential powers if they are used by him to change the state system. This insulting article, which seems to suspect the president a priori of ill intent, flagrantly violates the original constitutional status of the head of state. His removal from office is permitted contrary to

the judicial procedure envisaged by the Constitution as one of the stages of impeachment.

What next, then? According to a statement by the president's press secretary, Boris Yeltsin is studying the scale of the political damage done to Russia's the constitutional system by the Congress.

Incisive actions in response should be expected from the president. He will scarcely be satisfied with his enquiry to the Constitutional Court regarding the lawfulness of the Congress decree. Moreover, Valeriy Zorkin's evasive stance does not promise a swift or, most importantly, successful examination of the case. He will most likely appeal to the people and declare an all-Russia poll. On winning it Yeltsin could again receive the people's vote of confidence, after which the "advance of soviet power across the country," declared by Khasbulatov, will become very difficult.

Army Daily Assesses Congress

PM1803093793 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Mar 93 pp 1, 3

[Vladimir Yermolin commentary: "Congress Rejects Compromise With President. Confrontation Between Branches of Power Enters New Phase"]

[Text] The news that the latest Congress of People's Deputies suspected the Army of undertaking actions and decided to call the "power ministers"—the ministers of defense, internal affairs, and security—to the Grand Kremlin Palace will scarcely come as a surprise to military men. This happened on Friday: First Yuriy Yudin, coordinator of the "Army Reform" parliamentary group, interrupted a press conference, alarming journalists with a report that 10 vehicles containing "men in camouflage uniform" had appeared on Kremlin territory at 1450 hours. Then Deputy Mikhail Astafyev, a Constitutional Democrat and member of the National Salvation Front, conveyed this news to the whole Congress. It naturally immediately occurred to people that there was a need to hear what the ministers of defense, internal affairs, and security had to say.

To be fair, it has to be noted that the majority of deputies reacted to this news with irony. Many people remember how "men in camouflage uniform" similarly "entered the Kremlin" during the last Congress. However, Ruslan Khasbulatov nevertheless gave orders to find out what was up. Aslanbek Aslakhanov, chairman of the parliamentary Committee on Questions of Legality, Law and Order, and the Fight Against Crime, gave an explanation a bit later. He came to the conclusion that if you can consider snow-clearing trucks to be troops, then "troops" really had been brought into the Kremlin. Ruslan Imranovich cut short Aslakhanov's attempt to take to task those deputies who are inclined to panic.

During the recess I approached Army General Konstantin Kobets, Russian Federation people's deputy, and asked him to comment on the episode of the "introduction of troops into the Kremlin." The general unequivocally judged this whole ballyhoo to be an attempt to draw the Army into politics and play the "Army card." What is more, just as at the last Congress, this was done at the most tense and critical moment, when the deputies had a series of decisive votes to make.

Unfortunately, the expected dialogue between the representative and executive branches of power simply did not take place at the Congress. And the aforementioned details of the polemic at the Congress merely testify that both sides increasingly often proceed not from the agreements they have reached, but from assumptions about the degree of perfidy their adversary is capable of. Of course, when relations between the two branches of power are like this, we ordinary Russians cannot expect anything good.

Readers of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA undoubtedly already know about the main Congress documents—the decree "On Measures To Implement Constitutional Reform in the Russian Federation" (on the decree of the Seventh Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies "On Stabilizing the Russian Federation's Constitutional System"), the decree "On Observance of the Russian Federation Constitution (Basic Law) by the Supreme Organs of State Power and Officials," and the decree on deeming the referendum not to be expedient at the present time and postponing indefinitely the question of early elections (when the Supreme Soviet has adopted the relevant law).

As a result, the legal scope granted to the Russian Federation president for his activities has not simply decreased but, it seems, has sadly acquired the property of shrinking constantly. In the opinion of observers, the partial concession to Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin (the deputies after some hesitation placed questions of current state administration of federal state property and a number of other powers in the government's charge) is nothing more than the first step on the road to "alienating" the government from the president. I was able to talk with deputies of various political persuasions at the Congress, and all of them—some approvingly, some disapprovingly—admitted the trend toward "cutting" presidential power in the long term down to the honorary mission of representing Russia abroad.

There is no doubt that this prospect does not suit Boris Yeltsin. It would be least desirable of all for questions of the structuring of state power in Russia and of making its "triad" of branches of power into a harmonized mechanism for state administration to become a matter for street democracy.

In his concluding address to the Congress Ruslan Khasbulatov explained the failures in the economic reform as the result of the poor running of society and uncoordinated state power. It is the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet chairman's opinion that the significance of the

Congress as a stabilizing element lies in the fact that the Congress completely restored the Russian Federation Constitution, "cleared the political obstructions, and opened the way to carrying out the decisions of the Seventh Congress of People's Deputies on socioeconomic questions," and seriously increased the government's role in resolving economic questions. Khasbulatov noted that that society "will most likely reach in the near future a decision on the need for early elections of both deputies and the president." Then the new team, parliament's speaker hopes, will live without ambitions, in accordance with the law and the constitution.

The presidential side gives a totally different assessment of the Congress.

"The results of the work of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies inspire us with deep fear," Vyacheslav Kostikov, the Russian Federation president's press secretary, stated. "The Congress rejected the opportunity for an agreed resolution to the constitutional crisis. Its decisions seriously exacerbated the imbalance between branches of power and jeopardized the state system and order in the country. By denying the people the right to express their will through a referendum, the Congress set off along the path of violating the constitution and of direct confrontation with the lawfully elected Russian president." In Kostikov's opinion, Ruslan Khasbulatov's concluding address to the Congress "is a call for the soviets to seize power in the center and the provinces." The president's reaction to everything which took place at the Congress will be made public in the near future.

Incidentally, during the Congress the Army remained in barracks. Even scheduled exercises were not carried out. But, as we can see, its threatening specter was nevertheless abroad in the Grand Kremlin Palace. It seems to me that there is actually a positive element in all this: Let us hope that eventually the Army, as a symbol of strong statehood, will not allow people to forget once and for all that Russia's good, its state power, and its integrity stand far above vain thoughts of power.

Republics Seen As Winners After Congress

PM1803142193 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 1

[R. Zaripov article: "The Leaders' Rite of Spring"]

[Text] The Eighth Congress of Russian People's Deputies claims to be a turning point and a decisive Congress in Russian state life. I say that without irony, consciously using the terminology of the "manuals of the seventies." This Congress was consistent to the end and did not turn back, unlike the previous forum. Khasbulatov's closing call—to study the materials and hold local sessions with the participation of "inspectors" from the center—did not cause discord in the hall.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin lost this Congress, like the previous one, and was unable to escape from the "trap" created by his team when it was led by Gennadiy Burbulis. His ostentatious walkout from the Congress did not achieve the desired result—clear evidence that the president's charisma has long since faded in the deputies' eyes and cannot be relied on. Could Yeltsin have secured the deputies' agreement not to reject the decree adopted at the Seventh Congress and not to bring into effect the "frozen" articles of the constitution? Perhaps he could, but a serious tactical error—Justice Minister Nikolay Fedorov's speech—so alienated deputies that Yeltsin's chances were reduced to naught.

The prime minister's speech on the last day of the Congress proved to be highly indicative and descriptive of the state of affairs in the president's team. "Chernomyrdin's thank you" and its emotional complexion—essentially assurances of loyalty to the Congress—were so grating on the ear that in my opinion they surprised the deputies themselves too. What was behind this? Scenario one is that the premier wanted to keep Chubays and Kozyrev in the team and soften the blow against them. Scenario two is less obvious but could be more accurate. Chernomyrdin has gotten the desired legislative initiative and is now entitled to make decisions and go to straight to parliament, bypassing the president. The latter is "undermined" and to some extent becomes a figurehead (recall how Union Premier Pavlov distanced himself from President Gorbachev—it is the same pattern).

The Congress' decision not to hold the all-Russia referendum leaves Yeltsin at a crossroads: Either he asks the Constitutional Court to revoke the Congress' decision (in which case Court Chairman Valeriy Zorkin, who signed the well known decree, will have to make a difficult choice), or he collects signatures from the population, or he holds a plebiscite. According to Vladimir Shumeyko's statement, the president preferred option three. With a positive outcome the plebiscite will yield moral dividends for Yeltsin but does not have the legal foundation which could have been the basis for taking the necessary steps. Furthermore, the phrasing of the question itself, which presumes choosing between the president and the Congress, might not yield a positive result. The fall in the living standard and the political crisis have perceptibly reduced Yeltsin's popularity among the population. But a different wording—such as do the people need the Congress as one of the power structures—could work because the electors have had a good long look at their elected representatives.

Strange as it may seem, you cannot call Ruslan Khasbulatov, the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, a winner either. Khasbulatov needs Yeltsin. The idea of playing off the deputies against the executive and above all the president has consolidated deputies around the speaker and was one of his main supports. If Yeltsin goes, so will Khasbulatov, whose position is fairly shaky. Yeltsin also needs Khasbulatov because his replacement does not promise the president anything other than a deterioration of the situation.

The leaders of the republics within Russia are the undisputed winners. Their overt strengthening is the Congress' main result. A regrouping of forces has taken place with the result that it is not the confrontation between the executive and the legislature which is coming to the fore, but the clash between the ideas of federalism and confederalism. The lack of accords within the framework of federal power leads to its inevitable weakening. The Congress is effectively sawing through the branch on which it is sitting.

The republics have been given an opportunity to play on the contradictions within the federal power. Both the executive and the legislative branches of power will be forced not only to agree among themselves but also to seek support and a buttress among the subjects of the Federation. This will enable the regions to pump the maximum amount of power from the center to the localities on the basis of the principle of who will be of more use to them.

In discussion with former USSR Deputy Sergey Tsyplyayav at the Congress—he is now the Russian President's representative in St. Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast—we came to the conclusion that the development of events is making the Congress and the parliament of Russia the hostage of the republics and is a complete repetition of the scenario of events at the Union parliament. The republic soviets are not far from the decision to recall their deputies from parliament, and then the Congress could automatically cease to exist. The main problem is that deputies are failing to take into account the fact that the erosion of Russia will not go as smoothly as that of the Union but will be marked by profound upheavals.

Paper Analyzes Congress 'Mailbag'

PM1803113793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Report issued by Russian Supreme Soviet Press Center: "Mailbag Testimony"]

[Text] A heavy stream of letters and telegrams from citizens, labor collectives, and social organizations is currently pouring into the country's highest representative power, just as it did immediately prior to the convening of the Eighth (Extraordinary) Congress of People's Deputies, and while it was in session.

Over 60 percent of this mailbag is made up of the electorate's responses to the Congress's work, and its attitude toward a possible referendum and the questions being submitted for it, and toward the forms of state management. The nature and content of this mailbag and an analysis of the statistical information prove that the position expressed by Russians in the letters and telegrams does not coincide with the images artificially inspired by many media sources of the inefficient work of the Congress, and the disparity between its decisions and the opinion of the majority of citizens. For instance, one appeal in two expresses support for the "Congress's principled position of unswerving compliance with the Constitution by all branches of power." Another significant portion of the Congress mailbag reflects demands for mutual understanding between the powers; at the same time, the electorate evaluates wholly critically the actions of the president and of parliament. The mailbag for the first half of March shows that 76.4 percent of those citizens who sent in responses to the activity of the president and the government evaluate that activity negatively, and only 11.3 percent evaluate it positively. At the same time, 45.5 percent of citizens gave a negative evaluation of the activity of the Congress and the Supreme Soviet.

Despite the diversity of views expressed by the letters' authors, the majority of Russians are concerned not about the mythical problems of whether or not to be a presidential republic, but rather about the negative consequences of the reforms being conducted, and the social vulnerability of most of the population. The overwhelming majority of appeals support the need for joint efforts in the quest for ways out of the economic crisis.

Regional Affairs

North Ossetian State of Emergency Extended

LD1703132593 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1300 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] A meeting of the North Ossetian Security Council and the Military Council of the Joint Command of the group of forces stationed in the conflict zone was held in Vladikavkaz today. A decision was made to extend the state of emergency regime in the region beyond 31 March.

New Round of Ingush-North Ossetian Talks Opens

LD1803115493 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1000 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] A new round of talks between the plenipotentiary delegations of Ingushetia and North Ossetia will open in Kislovodsk today. Akhsarbek Galazov, chairman of the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet, and Ruslan Aushev, president of the Ingush Republic, are expected to attend the talks.

As at the previous meetings, attention will be focussed on the problem of Prigorodnyy rayon. According to forecasts, this round of talks will be difficult and will be successful only if both sides show readiness for a compromise.

Leaders To Meet

OW1803125693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1132 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Ingush President Ruslan Aushev and the speaker of the North Ossetian parliament Ahsarbek Galazov are expected to meet in Kislovodsk today before another round of talks between delegations. They will concentrate on ways to solve the problem of refugees from Prigorodnyy region of North Ossetia.

According to the federal migration service, the number of Ingush refugees from the district is approaching 49,000 while the number of Ossetian refugees amounts to 7492.

The Ossetian side is not opposed to the return of Ingush refugees who are North Ossetian citizens but insists on their settlement in separate communities.

The Ingush side demands the return of the refugees to their homes, which the Ossetian side finds unacceptable because this will inevitably lead to the resumption of armed clashes.

Analysts say that if the refugee problem is not resolved in the nearest future, one should expect the escalation of the conflict which will make the situation hardly controllable.

The delegations of the two sides as well as the leaders of the two republics are arriving in Kislovodsk in the afternoon.

Chechen Referendum May Go Ahead; Deputy on Questions

LD1703222193 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By correspondent R. Khadzhiyev; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The referendum in Chechnya, which some people feared and others persistently pressed for, looks set to take place, after all. True, General Dudayev has vetoed the parliament's decision on the referendum, just in case, while angry lawmakers deemed the work of the president's Cabinet of Ministers as unsatisfactory. The Committee for national concord and the electoral committee are indefatigably getting ready for 27 March.

In the opinion of Aslanbek Aslakhanov, Russian People's Deputy, the following questions should be proposed for the upcoming referendum.

[Begin A.Aslakhanov recording, chairman of a Russian Federation Supreme Soviet committee] Do we need a president or not? What should the Supreme Soviet and people's deputies be like? [end recording]

Chechen Security Chief Supports People Against Dudayev

MK1703075093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 3

[Untitled items in "NEGA reports" column]

[Text] Chechnya's National Security Service is refusing to protect President Dudayev.

Heads of the National Security Service of Chechnya have announced that due to a difference between parliament and the government they will not become involved in the political struggle and will resist attempts by all branches of the executive authority to become involved in political games.

Salman Khasimikov, chairman of the National Security Service, stated that, should the people take to the streets this spring to demand the resignation of General Dudayev, the National Security Service would not break up the meetings and would even turn against those who may try to use force against the people.

Tatarstan President Shaymiyev Interviewed

MK1703111093 Moscow FEDERATSIYA in Russian No. 29, 16 Mar 93 p 3

[Interview with Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev by Yelena Afanasyeva: "Tatarstan With Russia, But Without the 'Center'"; place and date not given]

[Text] One of the main problems at the Extraordinary Eighth Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies was the position of the republics incorporated into Russia, and that of other Federation subjects. Observers saw in it the danger of new "Tatarstans" appearing. Few people today, however, have a clear idea of the position of that republic "with a special opinion" on questions of the state structure of the Russian Federation. At FEDERATSIYA's request Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev explains it.

[Afanasyeva] Mintimer Sharinovich, recently there has been much talk about Tatarstan's sovereignty. What does sovereignty mean for you?

[Shaymiyev] Since the time we adopted the Declaration on State Sovereignty on 30 August 1991, everybody has been concerned about it and about its further implementation. We held a referendum, which took place in the difficult conditions of open counteraction from the Russian state bodies of power. They called on our people not to vote. Our people supported their president, however, and voted "yes."

[Afanasyeva] Judging by your words, the Russian leadership is in confrontation with the Tatarstan leadership.

[Shaymiyev] I would not say that. We are working on a draft treaty that is ready for consideration at the presidential level. I think that we have found ways to overcome differences. The only remaining differences concern Tatarstan's participation in the repayment of the foreign debt, our republic's share in the gold and diamond reserves, and the treaty formula itself.

We have decided for ourselves that we will conclude a treaty with the Russian Federation through a voluntary delegation of powers. By delegating powers we voluntarily limit our sovereignty, but there are also questions outside its territory for which Tatarstan can assume responsibility—for example, the maintenance of culture and language among Tatars in places where there are high concentrations of Tatar population in Russia.

[Afanasyeva] Are you ready to say today that Tatarstan is part of Russia?

[Shaymiyev] Even before the referendum we declared—and we are reaffirming this in the course of negotiations—that Tatarstan is not seceding from Russia. This, however, does not mean that everything should be dictated from the Center.

[Afanasyeva] Do any other republics have the type of relationship that Tatarstan is trying today to build with Russia, or is Tatarstan a "lone warrior on the battlefield"?

[Shaymiyev] Within Russia's borders ours is perhaps the only such approach. After all, Tatarstan has not signed the Federation Treaty. Moreover, there is no corresponding experience in the world. I am convinced, however, that Tatarstan's position will help the building of a democratic Russia. The danger from the Center is still great; the imperial mentality is still strong, and the wish to issue orders remains strong.

[Afanasyeva] Does this mean that they are issuing orders?

[Shaymiyev] They are trying to. If we had carried out all the instructions from Moscow during the year, our economic situation would have been much worse now. We are convinced that our policy of moving gently to a market economy is more in accord with Tatarstan's needs. We regulate the prices of basic foodstuffs. Moreover, we still ration staple products. We cannot possibly allow a situation in which foodstuffs are beyond the means of a majority of the people. We subsidize agricultural production, and I think this is right. Whereas in Russia overall agricultural production last year fell by 8 percent, our agricultural output has increased by 9 percent. Even in industry our decline is much smaller.

[Afanasyeva] By what means?

[Shaymiyev] Many people attribute it to the fact that Tatarstan did not make payments into Russia's budget. No one, however, wants to see that each hectare of our land works better than in Russia as a whole.

[Afanasyeva] But I have also heard other explanations—that Gaydar left you all the revenues from the petrodollars: Correct?

[Shaymiyev] An economic agreement was signed with the Russian Government for 1992, and we delivered more than half our oil to Russian enterprises. Not only did we fulfill our commitments, we even exceeded them. Today, however, there is no centralized support for the oil industry itself, and much of the money from oil sales has had to be spent on its needs. It is wrong to attribute everything to petrodollars. Some people are interested in presenting the republic in an unfavorable light.

[Afanasyeva] Do you think that the image of the republic as created by the mass media corresponds to reality?

[Shaymiyev] Absolutely not. Many journalists from central publications have come to us and have admitted as much: "We are being told about the situation in the republic something totally different from what we have seen here, moreover we are instructed to present it as we are told...." Is not the aim of these forces to disunite Russia? Before the referendum, people in Russian Supreme Soviet pool cars traveled all over the republic, handing out leaflets calling on our people not to vote, and trying to convince them that Tatarstan's sovereignty would destroy Russia. I have documents signed by committee chairman Podoprigora. This means there are forces that do not need stability in Russia!

[Afanasyeva] Mintimer Sharinovich, do you feel yourself in charge of the republic?

[Shaymiyev] Yes, I certainly do.

Tatarstan Grants 'Enforced Refugee Status'

PM1703143593 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 2

[Report by correspondent Nikolay Morozov: "They Have Found Refuge in Tatarstan"]

[Text] Kazan—Over the past three years over 20,000 migrants have arrived in the Republic of Tatarstan. About 6,000 people have received enforced refugee status. The majority of refugees are former inhabitants of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Moldova. This was announced by the republic's prime minister, Mukhammat Sabirov, at a session of the Tatarstan Supreme Soviet. The refugees are paid grants adn where possible provided with housing and work. The government is preparing a special law on enforced refugees. "But is there no flow of migrants in the opposite direction because of the aggravation of interethnic relations in Tatarstan?" was the question at a press conference held by the republic's president, Mintimer Shaymiyev. "As far as I know not a single family has left Tatarstan for that reason," the president replied.

Navy Gradually Withdrawing From Sovetskaya Gavan

OW1703152693 Khabarovsk Radio Khabarovsk Network in Russian 0945 GMT 9 Mar 93

[From the "Kray News]

[Text] An important agreement was reached between the Sovetskaya Gavan administration and the command of the local naval garrison. From now on, the majority of the bays and coves formerly closed to civilian maritime traffic are being opened. Such a decree stems from the above news, and is explained by the change in the situation—the navy is gradually leaving the waters of the Sovetskaya Gavan bay, and its place is being taken by civilian mariners.

One more trading port is being created in the Sovetskaya Gavan area. It will concede little to the port at Vanino, and these circumstances must be considered even by the military.

International Affairs

Kravchuk on Future, Relations With Russia

OW1803084893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0721 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Interview with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk by INTERFAX special correspondent in Kiev; from the "Problems & Opinions" feature; date not given—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The role which Ukraine plays today as an independent state is significant and continues to grow. The domestic and foreign policies of this European country are of great interest, along with the views of the head of state on relations with Ukraine's neighboring countries—the former Soviet republics and now commonwealth states. Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk had an hour long interview with an INTERFAX special correspondent in Kiev to discuss these topics.

[INTERFAX] It is widely believed that the former Soviet republics, now independent states, follow a similar, if not the same, pattern in their development. Can one say that Ukraine goes its own way?

[Kravchuk] Aside from general rules which summarize the experience in building a society, there are specific conditions and patterns in the development of every nation. They should by no means be neglected, for it is they that dictate the sequence of stages in development of a particular nation.

Thus Ukraine, like other former Soviet republics, stayed in the framework of the union for 70 years. But for 350 years Ukraine and Russia were one territorial entity. Consequently, we share one, let us call it Slavic, pattern of development. Whether we like it or not, we should bear in mind our common religion and similarity of national mentalities.

There are also purely Ukrainian specifics. Firstly, our country is situated in the center of Europe, it is a European and only a European state. Secondly, Ukraine is a multi-national state. Large numbers of people of other nationalities live on its soil. For instance, there are 12 million Russians living here.

Ukrainian statehood also has its specifics such as a peasant or cossack republic. These specifics shaped the civic, political, and military-political structure of the country. This process was interrupted by Peter I and Catherine II. If this had not happened, Ukraine could have developed a social model of its own.

It is in the light of Ukraine's historical experience that we are building now a new society from the outset but we are also building a new independent state which is citizenship rather than nationality-oriented. In our view a Ukrainian is, above all, a man or woman living on Ukrainian soil. His nationality, or ethnic origin, may be for instance, Russian but he lives in Ukraine and so he is its citizen. This is also the case of (the United States of) America. We emphasize this point and are convinced that we are right. Any other approach in a multi-national society is not viable, for such a society could be shattered by ethnic conflicts.

State managerial structures and armed forces are being built in Ukraine along the same lines. In our parliament and government you can see people of various ethnic origins. Nobody asks them if they are Russian or Ukrainian.

[INTERFAX] Does this approach influence the economic development of independent Ukraine?

[Kravchuk] It certainly does. We cannot build the Ukrainian economy in disregard of its specifics. In particular, heavy industry accounts for 80 percent of Ukraine's national economy. Naturally, the restructuring of this economy requires a specific approach. A recipe that would also work, say, for Moldova can hardly be worked out.

As for the ultimate goal of our efforts, I wish to emphasize that we are building a law abiding democratic independent state, a civilized civic society. This process is going on against the background of our history, economic structure, multi-national society, and its past. We pin the hopes for our future on all these ingredients of an organic whole.

[INTERFAX] What kind of future is this?

[Kravchuk] Ukraine's future is what I would call a mixed republic. Ukraine has always been closer to a democratic than to a presidential republic. Incidentally, I do not think that there are "purely presidential" republics anywhere in the world. Therefore when I say "a mixed republic" I mean a presidential-and- parliamentarian model.

To put it differently, parliament must be strong enough and possess sufficient counterbalances to make the evolution towards authoritarian rule impossible. I am also sure that a presidential republic must not be tied up with a specific personality. Today's president may be a democrat but who is going to take over from him? Democracy needs solid guarantees.

I do not intend to analyze the Russian experience in this light but I do believe that a presidential republic does not mix well with a federative structure of the state. When presidents were elected in the autonomies, how did it happen that some president is above another? On the other hand, unduly strong powers must not be vested in parliament which could also become a dictatorship. What could happen is that once deputies are elected, who is above them? Parliament and the congress are above the president, but who is above the congress? The same deputies, which means, nobody. And thus such a regime could be born in which there was no higher authority.

In my understanding a "mixed republic" is most of all a balance of powers in the name of true democracy.

[INTERFAX] Will this emphasis on Ukrainian specifics not set the country and its closest neighbors apart? Ukrainian media and not they alone give prominence today to an "oil war" or "oil whip", etc.

[Kravchuk] When I was chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet and a member of the USSR House of Federation in 1990 I arrived at the Kremlin directly from my leave to attend a session of the house. A group of oil industry managers warned then that the industry was on the brink of a disaster. They asked Gorbachev himself for help. Today quite a lot of wells have been closed. The oil industry of the former USSR is in dire straights and we must help it out of this predicament.

The trouble is not only in that, as some say, Russia will have to buy oil and oil products abroad soon. The vast natural riches are abandoned. This is why I feel that the Surgut meeting of the heads of governments was the first but a very important step, useful for the entire commonwealth. We should see to it that tangible results are forthcoming. This initiative should not be allowed to die. What distresses me is that some of the participants reason like this: "We will invest cash and material into Russian Tyumen but Russia can close the valve any time".

[INTERFAX] Do you think there are good reasons for these fears?

[Kravchuk] When officials talk about valves, it is natural that numerous people feel concern over their investments. Incidentally, this is also true of foreign investments in Russia. The same communists call for restoration of the USSR. When assurances given that nobody will ever touch the valve, everyone who have signed the Surgut documents will not be over-cautious but will act resolutely.

The main question remains, the size of shares and strength of the guarantees. Concessions and joint ventures are widely used in the world. If Americans set up joint ventures in Ukraine, why not Ukraine and Russia? We must find new kinds of cooperation, we must act together to protect the Tyumen region. But I will say it again, no ill-conceived statements, especially at the government level, must be made, especially so because economics must not be confused with political conditions. Incidentally, fuel prices are also politics.

[INTERFAX] The need to have a common market of CIS member nations is a theme which is recurring with increasing frequency. Do you, Leonid Markovich, back this idea?

[Kravchuk] When we made a decision on setting up the CIS in Belovezhskaya Pushcha in December 1991, this subject was broached, too. Immediately we started discussing the economic accents of the commonwealth, a coordinated policy in this sphere.

I asked, I literally begged Yeltsin, do not decontrol the prices. Do not make this ill-conceived step, for if you do, everything will go to hell. For if Russia unfreezes prices, Ukraine will have to follow in Russia's footsteps. At that time everything was jointly owned, including the ruble. Therefore the same disaster awaited all of us.

Yeltsin replied, "Can't do, I promised the congress that we would set the prices free and the congress supported that idea..." From that time, I think, the use of world prices in settlements between CIS member nations became inevitable. This was as illogical as setting prices free was. When I think of it now, I want to say again that we must help one another, not play tricks on one another.

Ukraine cannot afford buying many things at world prices. Still, a CIS market is a reality now as is a market of the former socialist community which includes, for instance, Poland and Hungary. They are not strong competitors in the western markets, either. Therefore we must make full use of the potential of trading among ourselves and only later improve the quality and reduce prices to make certain kinds of goods competitive. I do not think this can be done in any different way, for the world market has been divided and is not easy to penetrate.

Recall Europe's troubles with quotas on metal sales. Ukraine with its powerful metallurgy knows about this first-hand. For this reason I think that large-scale economic decisions cannot be taken on the spur of the moment, for acting such is likely to bring dire consequences to millions of people.

The distorted understanding of the concept of economic freedom in young CIS member states brought about much damage, I think. Before all, demands were heard "Freedom to factories!", "Do not tie the directors' hands!" Pray, what kind of specific freedom does the director need who manages state-owned property? He was hired by the state to manage a factory or a construction project, hired, no more than that.

Equally unreasonable are, in my view, the recent appeals to let "the prices control the setting up of a market." What kind of control are they? If you are a private company and try to sell your product, the choice is unambiguous, you either gain or are ruined.

But equally unambiguously, the director of a state-owned business insisted, "I will do whatever I want and I wish nobody to hinder me." A theory, if you can call this rubbish that, which was also in vogue: "In the economic sea the ship will reach the port and whoever drowns let him go down." And where did it lead us? I talked to Gaydar twice, cited specific examples. One of them was like this. Ukrainian factories sold their produce worth 650 bn [billion] rubles to Russia but were not paid for it. Gaydar asks me, "They should not have sold." Excuse me, I say to him, had the suppliers not sold

their produce to Russia, Russian factories would have stopped. What the Ukrainian suppliers wanted to do was to trade in a normal way.

I cited a more specific example. A Ukrainian diesel locomotive works supplied its products to the whole of the former Union. Billions of rubles are owed to the works now but nobody is bothering to pay. But the works is not a private enterprise. Neither is the Russian Ministry of Transportation to which the locomotives were shipped. But the story has been dragging on for six months. I am under the impression that there are forces that purposefully make things worse, in this case in the economy.

[INTERFAX] What are these forces, who are those people, where do they hide?

[Kravchuk] I will recall an illustrative story which will provide a better explanation than general descriptions can. A large foreign firm proposed reconstruction of a Ukrainian oil refinery such that 80 to 82 rather than 50 percent, as before, of oil is turned into useful chemicals. Wasn't it attractive? The company was prepared to finance the reconstruction which was to run into about half a billion dollars on the condition that the added output was to be the property of that company for three years. Ukraine would be able to buy the additional products from the company.

In my view, this was mutually beneficial. Both sides seem to be satisfied. I give a buzz to one of those responsible for the materialization of the project in Ukraine and ask him what about filling out the documents. And what does he tell me? "I forgot." This is the way numerous state structures operate. People do nothing at all. Some are playing the waiting game and some are under political pressure. Most of them, however, are simply incapable of doing anything and unwilling to admit it. For this reason they say that no changes are needed in the economy. Most of them are nice people but they are in the wrong seats. Serious work is not their strong point.

[INTERFAX] Speaking of competence, what is your opinion of the Leonid Kuchma government? It is described as a professional anti-crisis team which, unless I am wrong, has extraordinary powers.

[Kravchuk] This may be true. As for the outlook for the government, whose extraordinary powers come to an end on May 16, I believe that if it scores even small successes, then it will stay despite the differences of opinion in the Supreme Soviet. This will be a decisive factor which will determine whether the extraordinary powers will be extended.

[INTERFAX] What steps undertaken by the government seem most radical to you?

[Kravchuk] I admire its pricing and privatization policy, especially as far as land is concerned. I am aware of the difficulties with which this course is implemented. In particular, as soon as the small lots near the peasant houses were to become privately owned, such noise was raised. The noise was made not by those who want to be land owner but by those who think that they alone can run the country and determine its future.

[INTERFAX] At the beginning of the interview you spoke of the common history of Ukraine and Russia. What do you think the near future of their relations will be? What obstacles should be removed to make the Ukrainian-Russian dialogue as normal as possible?

[Kravchuk] It should be clear that Ukraine and Russia have much in common not only in their historical development, they also have many common problems which should be resolved only on the basis of equality. I think we are going to come to that.

In my opinion attempts to drive the partner into a blind alley, by deliberately creating insoluble problems are hindering our neighborliness and understanding.

[INTERFAX] Could you give concrete examples?

[Kravchuk] Take Sevastopol. One cannot make unilateral declarations that it is a Russian city. Such declarations immediately close the door to solving this complicated matter. In general our countries, I think should have a very balanced approach to territorial problems, as well as the problem of ethnic minorities.

The five million Ukrainians living in Russia have only two Ukrainian schools. Russians living in our country have many more schools, newspapers and magazines. There is not a single Ukrainian school, day care center or theater in the Crimea where 600,000 Ukrainians live.

Still these problems should not be regarded as insoluble. We need patience and will. Wherever I speak I always emphasize that Russia is a special priority for us.

[INTERFAX] What do you think of the claim by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn that Ukraine is pushing Russia away with "shortsighted hatred"? This phrase from the letter of the famous writer to the Russian ambassador in the United States has attracted much attention.

[Kravchuk] I think in this case a highly-intellectual person has been cut off from information. He judges relations between Russia and Ukraine by NEW YORK TIMES reports and that paper often resorts to lies, that is no exaggeration. I am sure that Solzhenitsyn's claims that Ukraine is "pushing Russia away" are a result of distorted information.

Solzhenitsyn enjoys great authority. Unfortunately, such declarations distort the image of Ukraine. I would not start advising the famous writer, but I do not think it is always reasonable to publicize such declarations without studying or checking them. There are many interpreters of Ukrainian-Russian relations, by the way. We should not hasten to lash out at each other.

[INTERFAX] What do you think stands in the way of settling the issue of strategic missiles in Ukraine?

[Kravchuk] The same stalemate approach to the matter. We have invited Russia to sign an agreement under which Russia would have the right to technical supervision as the manufacturer of the 130 strategic missiles in Ukraine. We have 46 more missiles but they were assembled by Ukrainian experts together with their Russian colleagues.

Ukraine is pressed to recognize that all strategic missiles on its territory are Russian property. But there is a law passed by our parliament declaring that everything on the territory of the country is Ukrainian property. Russia has similar legislation. Does Ukraine claim the missiles stationed in Tambov region, for example? Laws should not be changed to resolve the problem, new approaches should be sought instead. For example, Ukraine does not claim the full cost of the above-mentioned missiles but only for part of the warhead substance. This approach implies the ultimate dismantling of the missiles.

[INTERFAX] Can this continuing argument lead to a "missile Chernobyl" the possibility of which is now being spoken of?

[Kravchuk] There is the problem of technical maintenance. But it should not be dramatized. High technologies require top- class experts and big facilities. Therefore one should not believe in absolute safety. However, there is no need to frighten the public.

Recently I had a serious discussion on the subject with Ukrainian experts and scientists. We worked out ways of resolving the problem which we keep a constant eye on.

[INTERFAX] Is your attitude to the CIS changing?

[Kravchuk] No, it is not. The commonwealth should go on living without changing its status. I think it should be helpful primarily in the economic integration of member-nations on the basis of usefulness and partnership.

But if it opts for political integration, this will be another blind alley, because the former Soviet republics are not ready for it today and will not be for a long time. Just think by way of comparison how long it took for the Treaty of Rome to make its way in Europe. Any attempt to go back to the USSR is wrought with dangerous clashes.

The reaction of CIS countries to Russia's attempt to get a UN mandate for peace-keeping operations in former Soviet territory is indicative of this. In my opinion such declarations should be done only with the consent of all CIS countries. I would consider a summit on the subject a normal way of resolving the matter. However, I learned about the initiative from the media. Can you imagine what countries not belonging to the commonwealth, say the Baltic states, felt when they learned the news? I am sure that any question, no matter how complicated, can be resolved if a political dialogue is conducted in a civilized and friendly way.

Politicians Evaluate Events in Russia

MK1703125093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 3

[Vladimir Skachko report: "Leonid Kravchuk Morally Supports Boris Yeltsin. Ukrainian Politicians Link Ukraine's Democratic Development With Victory for Reformers' Forces in Russia]

[Text] You should hardly expect any official reaction from the leaders of Ukraine to the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies of Russia, because any political event in the Russian Federation is regarded as a strictly Russian affair which an independent Ukraine has nothing to do with. Ukraine President Leonid Kravchuk and Parliament Speaker Ivan Plushch stated that Ukraine's position can only be manifested in moral support of Russian executive power as more democratic in comparison with parliament.

Representatives of Ukraine's top leadership expressed their views of the situation in the Russian parliament to your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent.

Viktor Pinzenik, vice premier for matters of economic reform, economy minister, people's deputy of Ukraine:

"Developments in Russia are complex and dangerous for Ukraine. If there is no political stability in Russia, Ukraine, in turn, will score no successes in economic stability. I want to stress that precisely in this case political factors affect our relations. For example, we reach understandings, sign agreements, but they do not work. For our part, for example, we have honored our obligations to mutually offset debts, but two months have gone by and Russia has neither honored nor signed the agreement to mutually offset payments and debts."

Vyacheslav Chornovil, chairman of the Ukrainian People's Rukh, people's deputy:

"We, unfortunately, are always second; we often repeat what happens in Russia, but we do it even worse. In our case contradictions are intertwined more artfully and are more veiled, while in Russia they are frank. What we see now is the executive being nipped at by parliament, and especially of late by its chairman Ivan Plushch, while in Russia the confrontation is frank. There may be worse confrontation in prospect between the authorities in Ukraine, too. As for Russia, we undoubtedly are morally on Yeltsin's side. We may criticize him for unreasonable statements, but making statements is as far as he has gone. Quite possibly, they are a sort of concession to the right wing, or ultra-right wing Russian forces. In my view, however, there is no one more democratic in Russia than Yeltsin. At best, someone like Rutskoy with his tough position and far from reformist mentality will take over. At worst—which is, sadly, a realistic possibility for Russia—someone like Zhirinovskiy will come along, which would be very dangerous both for Ukraine and Russia itself. But on the other hand, I do not think that the unity of Ukrainian and Russian democratic

forces is that important for Ukraine today. In Russia, the democratic forces have collapsed, and "Democratic Russia" has, in point of fact, ceased to exist. I do not know, for example, with whom I should try to unite."

Vladimir Grinev, Supreme Soviet deputy Chairman:

"What is taking place in Russia cannot be to my liking. In my view, it is revenge by conservative forces. As I see it: A stable situation in Russia is an augury that everything will be go normally in Ukraine.

It is necessary that Ukraine should do all it can, as America is doing, in order to voice its position somehow on developments in Russia, to support its democratic forces. Ours, unfortunately, is a stance of noninvolvement. This position cannot be successful in regard to Russia. We should actively cooperate with Russia and realize that once the conservatives win there, it would be very difficult for us to build anything democratic in Ukraine. We are very much bound together; this is a historic moment, and we should support the democratic movement both in Russia and Ukraine.

"This support, of course, may look like meddling in Russia's internal affairs, but still it is necessary to support President Yeltsin at what is for him a difficult time. He is the head of state, and what they are doing to him in Russia is something incomprehensible—it is dangerous. Any blow to market changes in Russia would affect Ukraine. I am convinced that the success of the reforms in Ukraine is determined by the success of the reforms in Russia, and therefore I would not like Yeltsin to lose."

Yuriy Sbitnev, chairman of the council of the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine, people's deputy:

"The conflict between the different branches of power is not news as far as Ukraine is concerned. These processes were coming to a head in Russia, and we could imagine that a conflict between Yeltsin and Khasbulatov might break out. The matter, however, is not how they are going to get out of the prevailing situation, whether they are going to find a compromise, or whether someone will be quitting the political scene. These are problems for Russia. Ukraine should be interested today in two things: First, on the one hand, to what extent will Ukraine benefit from a possible compromise between Russian authorities; and on the other, to what extent destabilization in Russia is beneficial or not beneficial."

Aleksandr Yemets, the Ukraine president's adviser on political and legal questions, people's deputy of Ukraine:

"The confrontation between the authorities in Russia is only the outer shell. The real conflict is between the reformist and conservative forces. There is yet another line. Prevalent among conservative Russian forces are those occupying revanchist positions in regard to the USSR and Ukraine's independence. This, however, does not mean at all that Russia's reformist wing has no such forces, but the proportion of revanchists among the reformers is less. Therefore, considering that we are in sovereign states, it would be desirable, at least spiritually, to support the reformers in Russia."

Iran's Va'ezi Discusses Cooperation With Ukraine

LD1803002893 Kiev UKRINFORM in Ukrainian 1612 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Report by UKRINFORM correspondent Oleksiy Trotsenko]

[Excerpts] Kiev, 17 Mar—The four-day official visit to Ukraine by Mahmud Va'ezi, deputy minister of foreign affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, ended today. [passage omitted: officials he met in Ukraine]

Ukraine will be a very advantageous partner for us, stated Mahmud Va'ezi at a news conference for Ukrainian and foreign journalists. The point is that the directions of the economies of the two states mutually complement one another. For example, Ukraine has highly developed coal and metallurgical industries, which we are interested in developing speedily. And so, Ukraine can give us essential help in this. In our turn, we have oil and gas, which the young Ukrainian state needs very much. Or take agriculture, for example. Ukraine produces sugar in great quantities, and gathers large harvests of wheat, both of which we would be pleased to buy. We can deliver to Ukraine citrus plants, tea, and fruit. Our countries are mutually interested in developing cooperation in the sphere of air and sea transport, construction, and other spheres. [passage omitted]

The Iranian guest left Kiev for Minsk today.

Completes Visit

LD1703235393 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in English 2200 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] The deputy minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran, Mahmud Va'ezi, today completed his four day official visit to Ukraine, during which he held talks with its leaders. At a press conference he called Ukraine an advantageous partner of Iran insofar as the orientation of the economies of the two countries makes it possible to supplement one another. Mahmud Va'ezi informed on the readiness of Iran to grant Ukraine credit to the tune of $50 million first and foremost for oil deliveries. He also stated that his country will exert efforts to return Ukrainian POWs who took part in the war in Afghanistan.

National Affairs

President Releases First Vice Prime Minister From Office

LD1703175993 Kiev Ukravinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Ukraine President Leonid Kravchuk has issued a decree on the release of Ihor Rafayilovych Yukhnovskyy

from the post of first vice prime minister of Ukraine in connection with a move to other work.

Yukhnovskyy To Remain in Parliament

OW1703200693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1919 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] By President Leonid Kravchuk's decree of March 17, Ihor Yukhnovskyy, has been removed from his position of Ukraine's first deputy vice-premier to fill another position. Yukhnovskyy said that he would resign in his Supreme Soviet speech in the morning of March 17. He said that he intended to remain a Supreme Soviet member.

Parliament Views 'Foreign Policy Concept'

OW1703172593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1646 GMT 17 Mar 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature prepared by Andrey Fershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin and edited by Boris Grishchenko—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] During a closed session on Wednesday [17 March], the Ukrainian parliament discussed Ukraine's foreign policy concept. One of our next issues will highlight the results of this session which considered, among other things, the ratification of the START- 1 treaty and the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

The initial agenda envisaged discussion of the indicative plan and of the 1993 budget. This issue was removed from the agenda, however, after President Kravchuk turned down the government- proposed draft. Kravchuk said that the provisions dealing with social guarantees and measures to combat inflation had not been properly drafted.

Finance Minister Hryhoriy Pyatachenko believes, however, that the draft budget for 1993 is "socially-oriented". He announced during a press conference in Kiev that according to the draft, social programmes will account for 53% of the 1993 budget's expenditure section (1.7 trillion karbovantsi) and more than 90% of the local budgets' spending.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: According to this draft, the general revenues will amount to 8.614 Bn [billion] karbovantsi. Out of this sum, state budget revenues will amount to 5.527.4 Bn karbovantsi. General spending will amount to 9.619.4 Bn karbovantsi, including 6.532.7 Bn karbovantsi worth of budget spending. As many as 6.285 Bn karbovantsi will be invested in social programs, and 293 Bn karbovantsi have been reserved for economic restructuring programs, including 136.3 Bn karbovantsi for agriculture. Defense- related spending will amount to 486 Bn karbovantsi. In the government's estimate, the budget deficit will account for 7.3% of the gross national product, while internal debt—1 trillion karbovantsi.

The finance minster is convinced that the budget should be adjusted once in three months. In experts' opinion, this is due to the uncertainty about prices on Russian fuel. A few days ago, Ukrainian Vice-Premier Yuly Yoffe announced that Ukraine would have to pay up to 400 Bn rubles (about 1 trillion karbovantsi) a month for Russian oil and gas. He believes that Kiev is unlikely to be able to do so.

Defeats Bill To Amend Constitution

OW1703193293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1711 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Aleksandr Kotsyuba, the chairman of the Ukrainian parliament's permanent Legislative and Legal Commission, submitted a draft amendment to the republic's Constitution for debate at a plenary session of parliament. The amendment provided for the resignation of deputies if the latter were to engage in duties designated for executive structures.

If parliament had passed the amendment this would mean that First Vice-Prime Minister Ihor Yukhovskyy and Vice-Prime Minister Viktor Pynzenyk would have had to submit their resignation. However, INTERFAX was informed in Kiev, parliamentarians rejected the amendment since this contradicted the law on elections of people's deputies. The amendment was thus sent for review.

Ihor Yukhnovskyy meanwhile announced his intention Wednesday [17 March] morning to resign from the post of first vice-prime minister.

Deputies Comment Amendments

LD1703235493 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1900 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Plenary sessions of the Supreme Council of Ukraine are continuing. In accordance with an approximate schedule of work agreed in advance, four issues were submitted for examination by deputies today.

[Unidentified correspondent] It seemed it was hardly worth putting one's all into discussing the issue of adding to the Constitution, the fundamental law of Ukraine, by means of Article 93-1. Oleksandr Kotsyuba, chairman of the commission for issues of legislation and legality, spoke on the issue. And the emotions in the hall increased immediately.

[Begin Kotsyuba recording] A fairly contradictory situation has arisen. Today all those people's deputies, who occupied the top, and appropriate posts envisaged by article (?85) of the Constitution, who are found in the Cabinet of Ministers, should lay down their authority.

And another situation has arisen here. During the course of parliament's activity, we introduced amendments and additions to the Constitution, and we introduced a statute about the president as well. A law on the president was adopted.

Appropriate structures of the president were created. All of this through the system of executive power.

But the most sharp conflicts were sharpened. A section of officials, who occupy posts in the president's administration, are not subject to the action of Article 85. But according to their official status, they occupy posts that are even higher than the posts of ministers. [end recording]

[Correspondent] Oleksandr Kotsyuba had hardly managed to finish his speech, when Deputy Holovatyy addressed his colleagues with an appeal to stop the parliamentary Khasbulatovism [Khasbulativshchyna] (?nor lobbyism) of one power or another—this is the position of Deputy Yemets.

Some of the parliamentary deputies expressed opposite positions. After all, there are as many convictions as there are people. And all the same, the situation, which has arisen in parliament, in our opinion is best reflected in the brief rejoinder of Deputy Chernenko—when will we finally be sincere? We say one thing, we think another, and we do the opposite.

And today as well, contrary to the expectations of the popular elected ones [deputies], after lengthy debates it was still not managed to put a full stop to the examination of the issue of adding to the Constitution by means of article 93-1 and the issue of suspending the authorities of people's deputies of Ukraine brought into the composition of the Cabinet of Ministers.

The deputies also spent more than three hours on the examination of the issue of implementation of the resolution of the Supreme Council of Ukraine of 27 January 1993 on the socioeconomic situation in the state, measures to stabilize it, the social protection of the population, and improvement of the work of the Supreme Council under the conditions that have arisen.

Volodymyr Demyanov, vice prime minister of Ukraine for issues of the agroindustrial complex, in his report outlined the situation, in which our rural areas have ended up on the eve of the sowing campaign. According to him, this situation remains worrying.

[Studio announcer] Another detail. During the session in the first half of the day, when the resolution on suspending the authorities of people's deputies of Ukraine who have been brought into the composition of the Cabinet of Ministers was being examined, Ihor Yukhnovskyy [first deputy prime minister of Ukraine] stated that under the situation that has arisen, he remains a people's deputy, and is laying down his authorities of first deputy prime minister.

Ivan Herts, minister of external economic relations, (?also) decided to keep his deputy's seat. But the deputies sent the resolution for further work to be done on it.

In this way, the deputy prime minister and the minister, up to now, have both been left with their posts and their seats. It is true, we learned this evening, that by today's decree of the president of Ukraine, Ihor Yukhnovskyy has been released from the post of first deputy prime minister of Ukraine in connection with a move to other work.

Information Administration To Replace Press Service

AU1703210993 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 13 Mar 93 p 2

["Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. 173 on Reorganizing the Press Service of Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers" issued in Kiev on 11 March]

[Text] Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers decrees as follows:

1. To create, on the basis of the Press Service of Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers, Ukraine's Cabinet of MinistersMain Administration for Information and Ties With the Press and Public.

To determine that the said administration is a legal entity.

2. To consider the following as the principal tasks of Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers Main Administration for Information and Ties With the Press and Public:

informing the population on the current activity of the government and on the decisions adopted by it;

giving assistance to the mass media in elucidating socioeconomic issues;

analyzing, generalizing, and submitting to Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers information on the course of the fulfillment of governmental decisions and materials of sociological studies regarding the attitude of various strata of the population in Ukraine's regions toward these decisions and also toward the government's operational measures;

preparing materials with explanation of the government's socioeconomic policy for foreign information agencies, television and radio broadcasting companies, and periodicals;

organizing the publication of advertisements meant for expanding Ukraine's international economic ties;

3. To determine that Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers Main Administration for Information and Ties With the Press and Public includes the Press Service of Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers, the Information and Analytical Department of Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers, the Department for Studying Public Opinion at Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers, and also regional bureaus in the

cities of Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kiev, Lviv, Odessa, Simferopol. Ternopil, Kharkiv, and Khmelnytskyy, and representatives in the Crimean Republic and in oblasts.

4. To allow Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers Main Administration for Information and Ties With the Press and Public to have three deputy chiefs who are also heads of structural subdivisions of the administration.

5. Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers Main Administration for Information and Ties With the Press and Public must, within one month, elaborate the Statute on the Administration and submit it to Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers for approval.

6. The Council of Ministers of the Crimean Republic and oblast state administrations must provide regional bureaus and representatives of Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers Main Administration for Information and Ties With the Press and Public with premises that are necessary for work and with means of communication and provide transport services for the officials of the administration. They must also make provisions for ensuring the reception by them of information on questions of the economic and social development of the corresponding regions.

7. Ministries and departments must assist Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers Main Administration for Information and Ties With the Press and Public in the fulfillment of its tasks.

L. Kuchma, Ukraine's prime minister
A. Lobov, minister of Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers

Crimean Supreme Soviet Discusses Draft Laws

LD1803002393 Kiev UKRINFORM in Russian 1728 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] [No dateline as received] Parliamentary hearings of draft laws, which in the opinion of the presidium of the Supreme Council could provoke the sharpest debates at the upcoming session, took place at the Supreme Council of the Republic of Crimea on 17 March. Draft laws on associations of citizens, and on elections to the Supreme Council, and of the president of Crimea, were submitted for discussion by deputies, scientists, leaders of national societies and communities, and leaders of public organizations.

In particular, arguments were provoked by an article on limiting the creation and activity of associations of citizens, which, many participants of the hearings believe, allow the activity of any "awkward" party or movement to be banned because of obscure formulas. Reaction to the proposal to introduce a quota for deported peoples at elections to the parliament of the republic was also ambiguous. The draft envisages the formation of seven national districts, in which one deputy each is elected to represent the interests of Armenians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Karaites, Crimeans, and Germans, on the basis of a majority system. It is proposed that 14 deputies be put forward in the Crimean Tatar national electoral district.

The draft law on election of the president of Crimea provoked almost no objections. Only some of those assembled expresed doubt, as to whether the Republic needs a president.

The first parliamentary hearings were without doubt useful. The authors of the draft laws have time to introduce adjustments to them, and to better prepare them for discussion at the regular session of the Supreme Council, which will open on 24 March.

Sergey Savchenko, UKRINFORM correspondent

Chornovil Opposes Coup in Supreme Council

AU1803093993 Kiev MOLOD UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 17 Mar 93 p 2

[Report by the Ukrainian Independent Information Agency "Respublika": "Meeting of the Greater Council of Rukh"]

[Text] The Greater Council of Rukh [Ukraine's People's Movement for Perestroyka] held a meeting. Rukh Chairman Vyacheslav Chornovil addressed the participants. He stressed, in particular, that blaming the Democrats for Ukraine's present socioeconomic situation is unfounded because the apparatus is sabotaging the decisions adopted by those ministers who are supported by democratic forces. Chornovil believes that the main thing now is not to allow a coup to take place in the Supreme Council. In particular, it is proposed that the democratic minority quit the Supreme Council. The collection of signatures for the dissolution of the Supreme Council may only achieve its goal if democratic forces—the Coalition of National Democratic Forces [KNDS] and "New Ukraine"—join this action and the president specifies his position more clearly.

It was decided to postpone the discussion of the question on collecting signatures for holding a referendum on the early suspension of the powers of the Supreme Council. It will be dealt with by the central leadership of Rukh after other political and public organizations specify their position on this matter. Besides, the Greater Council of Rukh decided to insist that Ukraine's Constitution be adopted by the constituent and constitutional assemblies or that a new draft of the Main Law be elaborated and submitted for a referendum.

Belarus

Russia's Khasbulatov Arrives in Minsk 18 Mar

To Meet Shushkevich, Parliamentarians

LD1803112193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1017 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Oleg Velichko]

[Text] Minsk March 18 TASS—Russian Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov arrived in Minsk on Thursday. At the airport of the capital of Belarus, the Russian parliament chief said the Interparliamentary Assembly activities are precisely the trend of work which has serious prospects.

The parliamentarians are assigned the main role in the process of rapprochement and balanced development, he emphasised.

During the one-day visit, Khasbulatov intends to meet Stanislav Shushkevich and the leadership of the Belarusian Parliament.

The forthcoming talks are expected to focus on refining the activities of the Interparliamentary Assembly. The Russian parliament speaker leaves for Kiev on Thursday night.

The original programme of his tour has been supplemented by visits to Tashkent on March 22 and Bishkek on March 23.

Comments on CIS 'Consolidation'

OW1803120493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1130 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov of Russia's Supreme Soviet has come on a visit to Belarus' capital this Thursday morning [18 March]. Parliamentarians of the commonwealth countries have a major role to play "in the process of consolidation" of the CIS countries, he said upon his arrival in Minsk.

In answering journalists' questions, Ruslan Khasbulatov emphasized the importance of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly, characterizing it as one of the few Commonwealth structures with "serious prospects." The formally announced purpose of the visit to Minsk by the head of the Russian Parliament is to promote interparliamentary relations in the framework of the CIS and take part in the preparations for the 3rd plenary session of the Interparliamentary Assembly which is due to open in St Petersburg at the end of April.

Ruslan Khasbulatov's itinerary also includes visits to Kiev, Yerevan, Alma-Ata, Tashkent, and Bishkek, where he will address the same issues.

On Thursday morning, Ruslan Khasbulatov is meeting with Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of Belarus Supreme Soviet, in his official residence in the suburbs of Minsk.

INTERFAX has learned that Russia's deputy prime minister Yuriy Yarov, who was expected to accompany the parliament speaker on his visits, has not arrived in Minsk due to his sickness.

Shushkevich Discusses Domestic Issues With Administrators

WS1803085593 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1326 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Chairman of the Belarusian Supreme Soviet Stanislav Shushkevich met representatives of the local administration on 17 March and answered numerous questions concerning the socioeconomic and political situation in the Republic, the prospects for its development, and ways to overcome the crisis.

Speaking about the situation in the Republic, the head of the legislature emphasized that the creation of a new state demands new approaches, patience, and understanding. He pointed out that new approaches were especially hard to introduce in the economy.

Stanislav Shushkevich emphasized: "The situation in Belarus is complicated. The point is that we would like to preserve a strong economic union within the boundaries of what used to be the Soviet Union. But if the distribution system is rejected, such a union will not suit all its members. An economic union can only exist on the basis of a market economy. To achieve this, certain necessary conditions must be created. Duty fees at the borders should be annulled, and a single financial system should be introduced. This means that a common budget deficit and tax system should be determined."

While answering the question about his attitude toward the state administration system, the head of the legislature said that in the beginning he opposed the introduction of the presidency. He also emphasized that nor was he an advocate of the form of presidency suggested by the majority of deputies in the course of rating the balloting. "Yet, as soon as the Supreme Soviet has declared that a president is necessary, we must look for common approaches. Life forces me to become a supporter of presidential rule", said Stanislav Shushkevich.

The Belarusian legislature chairman also spoke on the course of the elaboration of the new constitution.

Security Adviser Danilov on CIS Collective Treaty

OW1703235893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1642 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Report on "exclusive" interview with Gennadiy Danilov, Prime Minister Kebich's chief national security

adviser, prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; place and date not given; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Belarus should review its position on the CIS Collective Security Treaty," Gennadiy Danilov, Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich's chief national security adviser, has told Interfax in an exclusive interview. Danilov considered that it would be advantageous to national interests if Belarus joined the treaty in the capacity of associated member. "Two essential conditions must be observed for this to take place: the first is for Belarus to be exempt from using its troops to "quell" conflicts between nationalities outside the republic's borders; the second is to exempt Belarusian citizens from having to carry out their military service anywhere outside Belarus itself," the adviser emphasized.

Danilov said that five circumstances vindicated Belarus' joining the treaty. The first was that there were no firm guarantees that the development of society in Belarus would be normal and stable during the period following the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the subsequent redividing of the world into various spheres of influence. The second was that over 70 years of Soviet power a dependable security system had developed for the republic which it would be unwise to destroy. Thirdly, a unified military industrial complex had grown up within the framework of the USSR. This was capable of guaranteeing the most up-to-date military hardware and weaponry and spare parts for all the signatories to the Collective Security Treaty. Fourthly, Belarus was unable to develop military science by itself. The fifth and final consideration was that Belarus possessed only two military academies. This was clearly inadequate for the training of highly qualified specialists for the republic's armed forces, Danilov considered.

Danilov considered in view of the above that "Belarus has declared its intention to achieve the status of a non-nuclear and neutral state and the deadline and method for achieving this status had not yet been set down in legislation. Therefore it would not contradict the republic's laws if Belarus were to join the Collective Security Treaty even for a transitional period." Asked about how the armed forces reform was being carried out, Danilov said independent Belarus did not need the large units formed on the basis of the military doctrine of the former Soviet Union. "At the moment these units are being split up into relatively small mobile units which suit the republic's purely defensive strategy," he said. According to Danilov, some 30 percent of the Belarusian forces have been reformed along these lines.

The total numerical strength of the republic's armed forces would be substantially reduced too, the adviser said. Thus, the air force and air-defense forces would be cut down by one-third. The total personnel of the Belarusian armed forces, today amounting to 117,000, would by 1995 be brought down to 75,000, he said. Of that number, 67,000 would be servicemen. Danilov said the government was planning to give a large number of jobs in the armed forces to civilians, who would, for example, be working there as doctors or drivers. Danilov thinks the proportion of civilian personnel in the republic's armed forces should gradually be increased to 30 or 40 percent. "These days, the state pays a lot more for a driver who is a soldier than for a civilian driver," he said. He is also in favor of military service on a contractual basis.

According to Danilov, nuclear stockpiles are not being reduced at the same pace in the West as in the East. That gave him "apprehensions," he said. "One has the impression these days," he said, "that while one side reduces its arms the other one is sending over inspectors to check how accurately the former side is fulfilling its commitments." Danilov and some officers from the Belarusian Defense Ministry are shortly planning to visit several NATO states to see how rapidly they are reducing their nuclear arsenals. The trip is to start on March 29. The adviser said Belarus should not be in a hurry to have Russian strategic forces withdrawn from its territory. According to an agreed timetable, the forces have to be pulled out within the next seven years, and Danilov believes it would be a mistake to cut that period down by more than half.

Concerning Belarus's arms trade, Danilov described that as a forced and temporary measure. He said budget allocations for the armed forces were enough to satisfy only 45 percent of their needs. The rest of the funds have to be raised by arms exports. He said Belarus was mainly selling abroad armored vehicles and rifles, doing this on the basis of quotas laid down by international agreements. "Belarus isn't selling any arms to countries where hostilities are in progress. For that reason, we had to turn down the requests of Armenia and Tajikistan," he said.

Anti-Crisis Committee Sums Up Results of Activity

WS1703091593 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1511 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] A year has passed since the Anti-Crisis Accord was signed in Belarus and the Anti-Crisis Committee, headed by Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich, was created. There has been little information on the committee's activity. This is easy to explain: when signing the accord, committee members, regardless of political dissent, agreed to jointly defend the state's sovereignty in the event of a threat from abroad. According to the statute, the mechanism of the committee's activity could only be launched in the event of a real threat to our independence. Fortunately, such an emergency did not occur. This is why the negative result is also a result of joint efforts of state structures and representatives of sociopolitical trends.

Leaders of parties and organizations, who had signed the Anti- Crisis Accord, participated in a briefing devoted to the first anniversary of this event. They pointed out that

it had become an important step toward the consolidation of all political forces in the name of security and national sovereignty. Oleg Trusov, chairman of the Central Council of the Belarusian Social Democratic Assembly, emphasized that Belarus had made a number of important steps towards strengthening its sovereignty and independence.

At the same time, participants of the meeting acknowledged that joint activity had not gone too well, and the Anti-Crisis Committee had not become the coordinator of the patriotic upbringing of the society, as had been expected. Nevertheless, the leaders of the parties spoke for the continuation of the accord's activity.

Transportation Minister on Results of Polish Visit

WS1703144593 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0605 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Report by Sergey Bulatov from the "At the Council of Ministers" program]

[Text] [Bulatov] A couple of days ago a government delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Stanislav Bril returned from Poland, where it held negotiations with Polish partners discussing the creation of the Belarusian Sea Fleet. Why was Poland chosen for a partner? This was my first question to Minister of Transportation Stepan Shkapich who participated in the negotiations.

[Begin recording] [Shkapich] After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Republic did not receive its due share of the Navy, although we are going to suggest holding talks on this issue with both CIS members and other states. Not waiting until the negotiations take place, we have found the most favorable solution. During our recent visit to Poland, we made a mutually advantageous decision to create a joint venture and a fleet on the basis of this venture. The single transport system and the geographical position of Poland and Belarus enable the development of our relations in the field of transportation. First of all this concerns transit. Last year we created the MerTrans cargo enterprise in Gdynia, which has already been in operation. It transports all the export goods produced by Belarusian enterprises. We want to develop the transportation system for our producers, as well as to use it for importing goods. This issue has positive and negative sides, and we are analyzing them. We know that the tariff policy in the CIS is changing dramatically; the price of power resources is increasing both in Ukraine and Russia. I think the issues of common policy will be solved. The establishment of relations with the West and an increase in transit will enable us to receive profits from transportation activity, due to our geographical position. This lies in the sphere of state interests. In the past, in spite of our efforts, huge means were lost. We received only about 30 percent of the real price of our goods. The rest was paid to the railroads and to foreign shipping companies at which we had to charter vessels. The creation of these new channels will enable us to regain a part of the currency in the form of dividends received from joint enterprises. We will also earn money directly, because we will be using two ships on the so-called commercial principle. They will be chartered to foreign companies under the supervision of the council of directors. We are currently looking for a person to be appointed president of the company, and preparing for signing all the necessary agreements and legal documents on this issue. These documents will create the base of the program [words indistinct].

The Belarusian banner will be hoisted on the Grunwald and the Gwardia Ludowa. The ships may change the place of their stationing depending on the contracts. They may be anchored at the Black Sea ((word indistinct)), at Nakhodka, or Balt ic ports. Everything will depend on how we develop commercial [words indistinct], how we cooperate with our enterprises, and to what extent our offer meets the demands of the world charter standards.

[Bulatov] The ships will be owned by the joint venture. What will be the Polish and the Belarusian share?

[Shkapich] The joint venture's property will be shared equally. The Polish side provides the ships; the Belarusian side provides the cash. During our visit, we also held meetings and talks with railroad managers at the Belarusian Embassy. We met the chairman of Gdansk voivodship and discussed issues concerning new transportation routes. In the nearest future, we want to establish the Novogrudok-Gdansk bus line to maintain cultural relations, because there are about 500.000 Poles living in Belarus and Belarusians living in Poland. We will also open the Minsk-Grodno- Gdansk airline. A special committee for transit will be created, headed by deputy prime ministers Goryszewski and Bril. We received Mr. Goryszewski's absolute approval. We must implement a huge construction program in order to maintain transit on the same level as it is being maintained between Germany, Italy, and other states. This program envisions participation in the construction of the Paris-Berlin-Warsaw freeway. It will connect Warsaw with Brest, Minsk, and Moscow. The Polish side is turning its part of the freeway towards Ukraine. We asked them to consider this issue all over again [words indistinct]. We will be able to build a new super freeway that could be integrated into our system. Later, when the committee is created, it will consider many aspects, create a national program for Belarusian-Polish transit. This program will include all the aspects of technology and of the work of national structures. There have been a lot of questions concerning the work of customs and border guards. We want to include the issue of border crossing into the program. [end recording]

Kazakhstan

Chief of Staff on Collective Security Treaty

PM1803105593 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 93 pp 1-2

[Interview with Colonel Alibek Kasymov, chief of Main Staff and first deputy defense minister of Kazakhstan, by Anatoliy Ladin under "In CIS Armies" rubric; place and date not given: "Work Without Sensations. But Not Without Problems"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] From KRASNAYA ZVEZDA's file: Alibek Khamidovich Kasymov was born in the city of Alma-Ata in 1954. He graduated from Alma-Ata Higher Combined Arms Command School and the M.V. Frunze Military Academy. He served in various command posts in the Baltic and Transcaucasus Military Districts and as first deputy chief of staff of the 40th Army in Kazakhstan. With the formation of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kazakhstan he held the post of chief of the operational directorate.

[Ladin] Alibek Khamidovich, it is 10 months since the Collective Security Treaty was signed in Tashkent 15 May 1992. Kazakhstan was among the six states to sign that document via its representative. What would you say about the way the republic is fulfilling the obligations it assumed?

[Kasymov] I believe that our partner states in the Collective Security Treaty have been able to see for themselves during this short time that Kazakhstan is committed to precise compliance with the treaties and agreements it has signed.

Are there any complexities in relations among the parties to the treaty? Yes, there are. But it seems to me that all the sides have already come to understand the need to coordinate efforts in the defense sphere.

[Ladin] In a collective security system the strength of each link is undoubtedly important. How strong is the Kazakhstan link today?

[Kasymov] The republic Ministry of Defense is making a big effort to ensure that our state's Armed Forces mature and strengthen despite the difficulties that everyone knows about. Great work is being done to improve the organizational and establishment structure and to bring it into line with the purpose of the troops.

We are concerned about the unstable situation in certain military collectives. Measures are being taken to strengthen military discipline and to eliminate the causes which prompt servicemen to go absent without leave from units and subunits. Finally, we are doing all we possibly can to end the migration of officers and to get cadres to stay put. As you understand, morale and the psychological climate in military collectives largely depend on this.

Is the Kazakhstan link in the system of collective security strong? I am in no doubt about this. I would like our allies always to have faith in our reliability. Here, as you know, it is not enough to have modern hardware and efficient weapons. It is far more important to master them to perfection. So we have constantly to tackle problems of troop training and to struggle against simplifications and indulgences, with personnel taking time off from training, etc. There are acute supply problems. I will say frankly that it can be difficult to arrive at mutual understanding with the defense ministries (committees) of Commonwealth states. Particularly when acute questions are raised with regard to ensuring the normal functioning of Air Force and Air Defense units and deliveries of arms and hardware for the Ground Forces.

What is to be done? We are seeking reliable partners unless we can find a common language with the former ones, and we are developing international treaty activity.

Nevertheless, planned training has been going on among the troops since 1 January. This year, according to the defense minister's instructions and the combat training plan, we will not hold large-scale exercises involving a large number of troops. The emphasis has been placed on qualitative parameters in the training of individual specialists, on the coordination of subunits, and on the improvement of management skills in both the tactical and operational links. Full-scale battalion exercises will be held after field firing by squads and platoons and company tactical exercises, including with field firing.

[Ladin] Thus Kazakhstan's army, having barely come into being, is becoming a reliable defender of the republic's sovereignty and territorial integrity...

[Kasymov] I would like to add to this that the republic's defense potential is a constituent part of the six states' collective defense alliance. At the same time we attach priority significance to military cooperation with Russia and, by way of strengthening it, we are increasingly actively developing bilateral contacts, as we are, incidentally, with other partners in collective security—which only strengthens our trust in each other and fills defense cooperation with businesslike substance.

For example, the Russian side has shown understanding of our cadre problems. Agreements have been signed on the procedure for officers to perform military service. Mindful of the coincidence of defense interests and of their desire to preserve a common military strategic area, Russia and Kazakhstan have decided jointly to develop and utilize the existing system of officer training so as to meet the needs of their Armed Forces for officers. Incidentally, junior specialists are continuing to be trained for us in training subunits of the Russian Federation Armed Forces. Mainly in those specialties in which the training center of the Kazakhstan Defense Ministry does not conduct training. We have not yet succeeded in eliminating the shortage of lower-link basic specialists in motorized rifle, tank, artillery, and engineer subunits or

in communications, intelligence, electronic warfare, Air Defense, and Air Force units. This is precisely why an experiment is being conducted among the troops to organize the training of junior specialists directly in divisions and regiments. Modeled on the regimental schools that used to exist. Several training companies and battalions have already been set up and are operating. Alma-Ata Combined Arms School will very soon become multiprofile.

[Ladin] The prestige of military service in past years has been substantially undermined for various reasons. How acute is this problem in Kazakhstan?

[Kasymov] There is quite high patriotic sentiment among our republic's young people. It is being maintained by the purposeful policy of Kazakhstan President Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev, by respect for the glorious traditions of the Soviet Armed Forces, and by a solicitous attitude toward the heroic history of the Great Patriotic War, toward our victory, and toward the veterans personifying the combat fraternity of servicemen of different nationalities and the strong friendship among the peoples.

The laws recently adopted by the republic parliament on defense and the Armed Forces, on military service obligation and military service, on the status of and social protection for servicemen and members of their families, and others will provide a good incentive for young people wishing to devote themselves to service as officers.

[Ladin] As far as is known, however, the process of going absent without leave from units and of draftees evading military service has not yet been entirely halted in the Kazakhstan Army either...

[Kasymov] This really is so. The army cannot cut itself off from the political processes of disintegration which, as we see, are still continuing. They have given rise to mass migration of both officers and privates. There were times last year when desertion, associated, as a rule, with the desire of servicemen to serve in the armies of their own republics, acquired a mass nature. Its negative consequences left their mark on the personnel of our army as well. It seemed to some people that they could now independently choose, of their own volition, a specific place of service actually within the republic.

It is possible, however, to reckon that the period of disorder and instability is over. The Kazakhstan defense minister has set a deadline for the return to their units of all who have taken advantage of the artificially created situation of lack of control and gone absent from them. In the future all deserters and those who evade the fulfillment of their military duty will be called to account in accordance with all the severity of the existing republic legislation in this regard.

At the same time the Kazakhstan Army is setting up its own system of educational work, with modern tasks. The institution of deputy commanding officers (chiefs) for educational and social-legal work has been introduced at all levels in the Armed Forces.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that rapprochement of legislation on military issues in the states which signed the Collective Security Treaty would do a great deal today to promote the process of stabilization in military collectives. For you will agree that attempts by one state or another to create more advantageous conditions for its own army than those that its neighbors have will lead to no good in this matter. If we want to have reliable defenses within the framework of a defense alliance, then we must combine efforts to ensure their high level in a renewed military strategic area. But if, as a result of some unilateral measures taken by one of the states, another one starts to lose military cadres, then, naturally, conditions are being created artificially for the weakening of collective security in a particular sector. I would like this to be correctly understood by parliamentarians of all the states which signed the Collective Security Treaty.

[Ladin] It is known that Kazakhstan has placed under its jurisdiction property and warships which belonged to the separate division of ships and vessels of the Caspian Military Flotilla. Is this sufficient to create the foundations of your own military fleet? What are your ministry's views on the joint resolution of naval problems with Russia and other states in the region around the Caspian?

[Kasymov] What Kazakhstan has gotten can in no way be called the "foundations" of the naval forces which the republic is forming. To be more precise, everything will have to be started from scratch. And we must start, since our state's sovereignty obliges us to know exactly the line of the state border also in the Caspian and to ensure its protection. This is not the case at present. This contributes to unhindered smuggling onto our territory and to plundering of the natural riches and biological resources of that part of the Caspian which belongs to Kazakhstan.

We expect the adoption of interstate acts concerning the entire spectrum of problems of the Caspian basin. The Defense Ministry has begun working out questions with regard to creating a Kazakhstan naval base on the shore of the Caspian. I will tell you bluntly that this is a costly business. It cannot be carried out in a single year. We propose that we will, by turns and in a planned manner, create all the necessary coastal infrastructure installations, equip the republic naval forces with the necessary vessels, and select, train, and place cadres.

Are we interested in cooperation with Russia, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan in resolving naval problems in the Caspian? Yes, we are. We hope soon to sit around the negotiating table with the participation of four sides.

[Ladin] What is the Kazakhstan Armed Forces Main Staff like today?

[Kasymov] It is quite a large organization. The Main Staff embraces over 15 directorates, departments, and

services. Even during the comparatively short time that the republic Defense Ministry has been in existence its structure has undergone changes, as the range of tasks is becoming wider and wider.

It is proposed to have military attaches in a number of countries with which Kazakhstan has established diplomatic relations. We take an active part in all measures of the CIS Joint Armed Forces High Command, and in Major General Aleksey Agafonov we have a permanent representative of the Kazakhstan Defense Ministry on the CIS Joint Armed Forces Staff.

There is, however, a lot that is humdrum in the work of the Main Staff. Fundamentally new guiding documents are being drawn up. Analytical work is carried on continuously, the necessary information is prepared for decisionmaking by the defense minister, etc.

I will not claim that the Main Staff has attained a high level in its work. But we are striving for this and imitate the experience of colleagues in other states, primarily the experience of the Russian Armed Forces General Staff.

It is possible, however, to reckon that the period of disorder and instability is over. The Kazakhstan defense minister has set a deadline for the return to their units of all who have taken advantage of the artificially created situation of lack of control and gone absent from them. In the future all deserters and those who evade the fulfillment of their military duty will be called to account in accordance with all the severity of the existing republic legislation in this regard.

At the same time the Kazakhstan Army is setting up its own system of educational work, with modern tasks. The institution of deputy commanding officers (chiefs) for educational and social-legal work has been introduced at all levels in the Armed Forces.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that rapprochement of legislation on military issues in the states which signed the Collective Security Treaty would do a great deal today to promote the process of stabilization in military collectives. For you will agree that attempts by one state or another to create more advantageous conditions for its own army than those that its neighbors have will lead to no good in this matter. If we want to have reliable defenses within the framework of a defense alliance, then we must combine efforts to ensure their high level in a renewed military strategic area. But if, as a result of some unilateral measures taken by one of the states, another one starts to lose military cadres, then, naturally, conditions are being created artificially for the weakening of collective security in a particular sector. I would like this to be correctly understood by parliamentarians of all the states which signed the Collective Security Treaty.

[Ladin] It is known that Kazakhstan has placed under its jurisdiction property and warships which belonged to the separate division of ships and vessels of the Caspian Military Flotilla. Is this sufficient to create the foundations of your own military fleet? What are your ministry's views on the joint resolution of naval problems with Russia and other states in the region around the Caspian?

[Kasymov] What Kazakhstan has gotten can in no way be called the "foundations" of the naval forces which the republic is forming. To be more precise, everything will have to be started from scratch. And we must start, since our state's sovereignty obliges us to know exactly the line of the state border also in the Caspian and to ensure its protection. This is not the case at present. This contributes to unhindered smuggling onto our territory and to plundering of the natural riches and biological resources of that part of the Caspian which belongs to Kazakhstan.

We expect the adoption of interstate acts concerning the entire spectrum of problems of the Caspian basin. The Defense Ministry has begun working out questions with regard to creating a Kazakhstan naval base on the shore of the Caspian. I will tell you bluntly that this is a costly business. It cannot be carried out in a single year. We propose that we will, by turns and in a planned manner, create all the necessary coastal infrastructure installations, equip the republic naval forces with the necessary vessels, and select, train, and place cadres.

Are we interested in cooperation with Russia, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan in resolving naval problems in the Caspian? Yes, we are. We hope soon to sit around the negotiating table with the participation of four sides.

[Ladin] What is the Kazakhstan Armed Forces Main Staff like today?

[Kasymov] It is quite a large organization. The Main Staff embraces over 15 directorates, departments, and services. Even during the comparatively short time that the republic Defense Ministry has been in existence its structure has undergone changes, as the range of tasks is becoming wider and wider.

It is proposed to have military attaches in a number of countries with which Kazakhstan has established diplomatic relations. We take an active part in all measures of the CIS Joint Armed Forces High Command, and in Major General Aleksey Agafonov we have a permanent representative of the Kazakhstan Defense Ministry on the CIS Joint Armed Forces Staff.

There is, however, a lot that is humdrum in the work of the Main Staff. Fundamentally new guiding documents are being drawn up. Analytical work is carried on continuously, the necessary information is prepared for decisionmaking by the defense minister, etc.

I will not claim that the Main Staff has attained a high level in its work. But we are striving for this and imitate the experience of colleagues in other states, primarily the experience of the Russian Armed Forces General Staff.

State To Control Alcohol, Tobacco Trade; Oil Tax Imposed

LD1803122593 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] According to ITAR-TASS, Kazakhstan has published the republic's budget for this year. Specifically, this introduces a state monopoly on trade in alcoholic beverages and tobacco produced in Kazakhstan. Enterprises and organizations involved in oil exports will have to pay the state 20 percent of the difference between the export price for oil and the price within the republic.

The Finance Ministry and the National Bank have been authorized to start selling short-term state securities and treasury notes. However, despite the efforts of experts and deputies to make ends meet in the budget, this has not been achieved.

The budget deficit is almost 183 billion rubles.

Media Workers Call Off Month-Long Strike

PM1703175593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Mar 93 First Edition p 13

[Oleg Stefashin report: "Strike by Karaganda Journalists Over"]

[Text] Karaganda—Workers at the Karaganda Television and Radio Company have called of a strike which has been in effect for more than a month.

As participants in this unprecedented protest action stated, their decision to resume work was dictated purely by a desire to get rid of the tension which has built up in the city, and it does not signify a renunciation of future struggle for their rights and freedoms. In the journalists' words, they in fact failed to get the oblast administration and the leadership of the "Karaganda" State Television and Radio Company to meet all the demands, which are of equal importance. In particular, the charges and criminal proceedings against a large number of compamy employees have not yet been retracted or halted, and those guilty of inflaming the conflict have not yet been punished; but the most important thing is that there are no guarantees that the local authorities have renounced once and for all their obsessive attempts to render the mass media completely subordinate to them, and to introduce secret political censorship.

Be that as it may, however, the striking journalists are back on the air again after their month's break. Back at work too are those journalists unfairly dismissed by the radio and television company leadership, with the exception of its former chairman, B. Mukushev. However, to all appearances another fate awaits him—Karaganda's inhabitants have nominated the rebellious journalist, whose publications are causing the authorities irritation, as a candidate for people's deputy from Kazakhstan.

Kyrgyzstan

Turkish Defense Ministry Officials Visit Bishkek

LD1703092893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0854 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Maynayev]

[Text] Bishkek March 18 TASS—Representatives from the Turkish Defence Ministry who arrived in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, this Thursday, will discuss military cooperation and joint training of specialists with the republican leadership.

The delegation is led by Turkish General Staff Chief Dogan Gures. The programme of the two-day visit provides for meetings with Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev, Foreign Minister Ednan Karabayev and Kyrgyz generals.

Nine commissioned officers and 13 school-age cadets from a paramilitary boarding school study in Turkey since the start of this month. Captains and lieutenants raise their skills at NATO courses, and cadets—at Turkish military schools.

The training is made under a Turkish-Kyrgyz treaty on military training and at the expense of the Turkish side.

PRC Ambassador Announces Osh-Urumqi Air Bridge

LD1703102693 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0900 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] A new air bridge has linked Kyrgyzstan with neighboring China. It was reported today that the Chinese ambassador in Kyrgyzstan informed the authorities in Bishkek about the opening of air communications between Osh and Urumqi.

'Major' Guidelines for German Assistance Defined

LD1703185093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1638 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Mainayev]

[Text] Bishkek March 17 TASS—Major guidelines for Germany's assistance to Kyrgyzstan were defined at a meeting between Ednan Karabayev, Kyrgyz foreign minister, and H. Bossman, head of a German team for technical aid to Kyrgyzstan.

According to Kyrgyz Foreign Ministry, the two countries will cooperate in the field of finance and taxation policies, private enterprise, labour market formation, social security and environmental protection.

The two parties have agreed in principle that Hans-Jochen Vogel, deputy chairman of the Socialist International and a Bundestag member, and Karl-Dieter

Spranger, German minister for economic cooperation, will visit Kyrgyzstan next May or June.

At present, more than 50,000 ethnic Germans live in Kyrgyzstan.

Embassy in Austria To Open; Ambassador Named

LD1703212193 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program Network in Kyrgyz 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] By decree of the president of the Kyrgyz Republic in connection with establishing diplomatic relations between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Austria, and also with the necessity of the development of diplomatic, economic, trade, and cultural relations with international organizations having headquarters in Vienna, it is resolved:

To establish an embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in Vienna in the Republic of Austria;

That the government of the Kyrgyz Republic shall resolve financial matters of the Kyrgyz Republic Embassy in the Republic of Austria.

By decree of the president of the Kyrgyz Republic, Omar Abdrazakovich Sultanov was appointed the acting charge d'affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic in Austria and permanent representative of the Kyrgyz Republic for international organizations in Vienna.

Proposal To Cultivate Opium Poppy Denounced

LD1803125993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1227 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Maynayev]

[Text] Bishkek March 18 TASS—The Kyrgyz President Press Service released a statement here on Thursday, denouncing a proposal by a group of Kyrgyz scholars and businessmen to resume opium poppy growing in the Issyk-Kul area.

Supporters of poppy plantations claimed that the implementation of their project will help Kyrgyzstan to produce annually over 100 tons of raw opium, the market value of which will be 700-900 billion roubles. This money will help pull the republic out of the present economic crisis, the supporters said.

The press service noted that the above price for opium can be fetched only on the black market, while the real value of the crop will not to 200 billion roubles. Nearly half of the total will be used for workforce, plantation guarding and transportation.

Proceeding from the past experience (poppy was grown in Kyrgyzstan for many years), substantial sums will be paid in the form of fines to international narcotics-control organisations.

Moreover, poppy plantations will make inroads into grain fields of mountainous Kyrgyzstan where land is very expensive.

The press service stressed that the resumption of Poppy growing will increase the crime rate, boost the number of drug addicts, undermine public health in the republic and worsen the nation's gene fund.

The press service statement says that the Kyrgyz leadership decided not to resume poppy growing. Moreover, republican law enforcement bodies, the Security Service and the republican Procurator's Office drafted a national programme to control drug addiction and drug trafficking for 1993-1997 on President Askar Akayev's instructions. The government establishes a state commission to control drug addiction.

Resurgent Communist Party Seen Challenging Akayev

PM1803113993 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Vladimir Berezovskiy report: "Communists Have Repented, But They Have Not Abandoned Their Principles"]

[Text] Bishkek—The Congress of the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan was held last Saturday in Bishkek. Absamat Mamasaliyev, chairman of the Political Council of the Congress of the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan, who used to head the republic's Communist Party which was banned by parliament 31 August 1991, delivered a 40-minute report. The leader of the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan blamed Mikhail Gorbachev and his superintendents of perestroyka who provoked the putsch for the breakup of the CPSU. In the opinion of the main speaker and many other subsequent speakers, three years of rule by the democrats have demonstrated their utter bankruptcy as reformers. The Congress unanimously demanded that President Askar Akayev correct his policy by "subordinating it to the interests of the people."

In the spirit of healthy self-criticism, the Communists showed repentance for their former mistakes: political monopolism, forgetting Leninist principles, conceit, and swelling their ranks to massive proportions. However, the new Bolsheviks have not abandoned their basic principles: As before, they oppose the capitalization of society, forced privatization, and ownership of land.

Without delays and skirmishing, the Congress elected a Central Executive Committee, a party council, and six delegates to the 29th CPSU Congress. Dzhumgalbek Umanbayev—a former member of the last Politburo—has become the Kyrgyz Communists' new leader. He kept a low profile right up to the last minute, but at a special meeting on 27 February he was hastily admitted to the rapidly growing ranks of the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan, which currently unites almost 10,000 people.

Umanbayev is a colorful figure in the Kyrgyz political arena. He plays a visible role in parliament and has a strong base of support in the regions.

The Party of Communists, which has announced its presence and is headed by an experienced leader, has considerably reshaped the political landscape of the republic. A serious opposition to Akayev's team has emerged, one that apparently cannot be ignored.

Birth Rate Declines; Infant Mortality Increases

LD1503173893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1042 GMT 15 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Maynayev]

[Text] Bishkek, 15 Mar—Last year saw the lowest birth rate in Kyrgyzstan in the past 48 years along with an increase in infant mortality. The republic's state statistical agency reports a difficult demographic situation. According to its data, the republic's population as of 1 January totalled 4,500,000. In one year it had increased by only 0.4 percent. Experts believe the fall in the natural increase of the population is largely linked to the departure of people from the republic; last year, for example, 26,000 people entered the republic and 104,000 left.

Tajikistan

MVD Chief Denies Exodus; Says Refugees Returning

PM1803123193 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Aleksandr Karpov report: "Tajikistan: Refugees Returning Home"]

[Text] Dushanbe—General Yakub Salimov, Tajikistan minister of internal affairs, has denied reports appearing in the Russian and foreign mass media that local inhabitants are fleeing from regions occupied by government troops as a result of prolonged fighting.

The head of the law-enforcement department described such articles as provocative rumormongering. He stated that hundreds of families are streaming from Garmskiy, Komsomolabadskiy, and other rayons in the Karateginskiy zone toward Dushanbe and certain population centers in the Gissar Valley after the former areas were freed from armed groupings of the implacable opposition. All those people fled from their permanent abodes last October-December under the influence of opposition propaganda, fearing "communist reprisals." Today, convinced of their safety, they are returning home. The minister stressed that the authorities are helping all who wish with transport and are prepared to ensure their protection throughout the homeward journey.

Gorno-Badakhshanskaya District Council Resigns

OW1703213593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1919 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The entire district council of the Gorno- Badakhshanskaya Autonomous District in Tajikistan tendered their resignations at a session of the autonomy's Council of People's Deputies in Khorog. In an interview with INTERFAX, Tajikistan's first vice premier, Makhmadsaid Oubaidulloyev, did not comment on the development, saying only that the people's deputies supported the appeal from the republic's parliament to the people of Badakhshan on a settlement of the situation in Tajikistan. Under an onslaught of pro-government troops, the main forces of the armed Tajik opposition retreated to Badakhshan.

The vice premier said a decision has already been made to name the former head of the Badakhshan administration, who until November, 1992, was also the chairman of the Tajik parliament, Akbarsho Iskandarov, ambassador to neighboring Turkmenistan.

According to Oubaidulloyev, a district council session considered the incident on the border between Badakhshan and Tajikistan which occurred Sunday [14 March] at the Sagirdasht pass to be a form of provocation. On that day, a group of armed persons of undetermined affiliation burst onto the pass in cars and told local residents they planned to establish a post there. The incident was considered to be the beginning of a major operation of pro-government forces against the opposition. Oubaidulloyev said that at present there are no armed groups in the pass, and the government is not withdrawing their divisions from Badakhshan.

Karimov Cited on Oil Trade Agreements, CIS Meeting

PM1703161793 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 1

[Igor Lenskiy report: "Not With Outstretched Hand"]

[Text] "Tajikistan is not only relying on aid, but is also ready to propose mutually beneficial projects to Russia and other CIS states," Dzhamshed Karimov, republic permanent representative in Moscow, declared in an interview for PRAVDA on the outcome of the Moscow meeting of heads of governments.

He was referring to Tajikistan's participation in developing the West-Siberian Fuel and Energy Complex. In exchange for supplies of oil, Tajik enterprises will dispatch transformers and cable equipment. Fifty teams of Tajik oil workers will go to Surgut to drill and operate wells.

All the participants in the conference in Moscow except Turkmenistan agreed to continue efforts to bring about peace and security in Tajikistan. Along with the Uzbek

and Kyrgyz battalions, 170 Russian border guards arrived in Dushanbe: They will be sent to the Moskovskiy, Pyandzh, and Khorog Border Guard Detachments. Military aid will supplement the CIS countries' joint foreign policy action. Its thrust is to dissuade Afghanistan and certain other neighboring countries from being tempted to interfere in Tajikistan's domestic affairs and also to block potential armed intervention from the territory of these states.

According to Dzh. Karimov, Tajikistan vigorously supports the idea of a single economic area and the activeness of the coordinating-consultative committee. A package of 12 agreements with Russia, the pivotal element of which is the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation, is completely ready. The date for an official summit meeting is expected to be proposed by the Russian side.

Commentary Praises Government Law, Order Measures

LD1703154693 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1200 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Analysis and summing up of the dreadful events of the past year very well proves the point that displaying even a shred of indifference toward the law and government resolutions and decrees interrupts order in society and adversely affects the population in general. Everybody should help implement laws and government resolutions and decrees.

The republican leadership is today are taking the necessary measures to ensure peace and tranquillity throughout the territory of the republic. We can now confidently state that all sensitive regions of the republic are under the control of government forces.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Committee for National Security, and the Defense Ministry of the Tajik Republic are taking effective measures to implement the decree by the Tajik Supreme Soviet on the voluntary surrender and confiscation of firearms and military equipment in order to confiscate as soon as possible all firearms illegally held by the population.

During the past few days, the residents of the city of Dushanbe may have observed that operations by government forces to strengthen public order and totally implement the decree on disarmament have become more widespread. Undoubtedly such measures and activities are bearing good results. For example, work discipline in state enterprises and institutions has improved. Hooliganism, theft, and plundering have decreased. Yesterday, in the city of Dushanbe alone the law enforcement bodies and government forces confiscated 35 firearms and 10,000 rounds of ammunition, and arrested more than 80 persons violating the above mentioned decree.

Recently, dangerous rumors spread among the residents of Dushanbe about the activities of a number of illegal headquarters. Thanks to emergency operations by the forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Security Committee, and the Defense Ministry of the republic, the activities of 10 such headquarters have been terminated.

It should be noted that Tajik Supreme Soviet Chairman Imamali Rahmanov has given specific instructions that the activities of such illegal headquarters should be ended throughout the republic. The tasks relating to public order and the protection of peoples rights and other [words indistinct] concerning the prosperity of the people of the republic will be undertaken and fulfilled by the law enforcement authorities, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Security Committee, and the Defence Ministry of the Republic of Tajikistan. Those who until now have been members of the republic's National Front and are willing to continue in the service can apply to the law enforcement authorities and to the Tajik Defense Ministry.

Therefore, the citizens of the republic and the residents of the city of Dushanbe can be confident that no danger is threatening their homes, [word indistinct], and their regions, and that their lives will continue to flourish.

Mojahedin Role in Hostilities Threaten Afghan Orphans

OW1803130393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1133 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The head of the local administration in Shahrinav region, Tajikistan, Shahob Sharipov is concerned about the future of the 170 Afghan orphans studying at a local school. The involvement of Afghan Mojaheddins in the hostilities in Tajik territory causes a new problem for the Afghan children who came to Tajikistan in 1984, he said.

Quoting members of the pro-government Popular Front he said that about 30 militants from Afghanistan fought on the side of the armed opposition in Garm valley. Some 60 local members of the Popular Front were killed in the valley. The head of the local administration believes that the Afghan children should be moved at least to Dushanbe to avoid unpredictable developments.

There are a total of 2000 Afghan children whose parents were supporters of the pro-Soviet government in former Soviet territory.

Foreign Trade Minister Receives Turkish Ambassador

LD1703112793 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Russian 1000 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Izatullo Khayeyev, Tajik Minister of Foreign Economic Relations, today received Orhan Erdinvali, the Turkish ambassador to Tajikistan. During the

meeting, they discussed issues concerning bilateral mutually advantageous cooperation between the two countries in economics and trade. In particular, they examined the preparation of documents on trade and economic cooperation, granting our republic advantageous credit, opening air communications between the states, and a number of other important documents awaiting signing at summit level.

Uzbekistan

Turkish Chief of Staff Arrives on Official Visit

Meets President Karimov

LD1703221893 Tashkent UZBEKISTAN APN in 1159 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Army General Dogan Gures, chief of the general staff of the Turkish Republic's Armed Forces, arrived in the Republic of Uzbekistan on an official visit on 16 March.

On the same day, he was received by Islam Karimov, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In the course of the conversation which took place, the leader of Uzbekistan informed the guest about the political situation in our republic, about the work aimed at maintaining stability and order in the region, as well as about sovereign Uzbekistan's peace-loving policy.

Meets With Defense Minister Akhmedov

TA1703121793 Ankara Turkiye Radyolari Network in Turkish 2100 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] General Dogan Gures, chief of the [Turkish] general staff, has started to hold contacts in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, on the second leg of his visit to central Asian Turkish republics. ANATOLIA reports that he first met with Uzbek Defense Minister Rustam Akhmedov. Gen. Gures was later received by Uzbek President Islam Karimov.

During his visit to Uzbekistan, Gen. Gures mainly discussed the help Turkey can supply to that country in the field of military training.

Karimov Sends Message to UN on Tajikistan

LD1803000193 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By correspondent Ivan Pankov; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov has addressed a special message to UN General Secretary Butrus Ghali. The text of the message was read out today at a news conference at the Uzbekistan Embassy in Moscow. The assessment of Uzbekistan's president is that the most tense situation now is in Tajikistan. If additional preventive measures are not taken, confrontations and conflicts may envelop the entire Central Asian region.

The insufficient safeguarding of the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan by the CIS countries makes it possible for extremist formations to filter across it. These formations are aimed at sabotage and terror in the former Soviet Central Asian republics.

Uzbekistan's president believes that the CIS countries should urgently undertake additional measures on this score. In his message, Islam Karimov asks the UN general secretary to send his personal representatives to study the state of affairs on the spot so as to afterwards examine their report at a UN Security Council session. [Video shows: two male Uzbek officials at a news conference at Uzbekistan embassy in Moscow, one of whom is reading Karimov's message; video is also playing an address by Karimov.]

Taskent Mayor Designates Housing Auction Authority

LD1703225693 Tashkent UZBEKISTAN APN in Russian 1159 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] The mayor of Tashkent, Atanbek Fazylbekov, has signed a resolution on the establishment of a universal center dealing in real estate under the Main Administration for Communal Properties and Privatization. This center has the right to conduct auctions dealing in real estate in the Uzbek capital. The center will receive 2 percent from the sale of housing put up for auction by the rayon local government, and 10 percent from the sale of real estate by private individuals. This resolution was adopted with the aim of cutting short the activity of semilegal and illegal firms operating on the housing black market.

Armenia

World Bank Proposes Earthquake Reconstruction Aid

PM1803105393 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Karen Topchyan report: "World Bank Comes To Help"]

[Text] Yerevan—It appears that the world has already forgotten 7 December 1988, the day when the calamitous Spitak earthquake occurred, taking tens of thousands of human lives. One-third of the territory of Armenia lay in ruins. With the exception of Russia, all the former ex-republics of the Union, as well as many other countries in the world, have long since wound up restoration work.

But then a few days ago Yerevan received a reassuring report. A special World Bank mission presented a memorandum on the elaboration of a program for the earthquake zone to the Armenian Republic Government for ratification. According to Deputy Economy Minister Arkadiy Ter-Israyelyan, this program is designed to have two phases. For the first two years, it presupposes the financing of a project to rebuild housing and complete the construction of incomplete enterprises with the aim of urgently providing people with housing and jobs. The second phase presupposes the implementation of a long-term program geared to the restoration of the infrastructure in the disaster zone.

Parliament To Consider Reopening Nuclear Plant

OW1803001993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1641 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Report prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to the Decree of the Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, on Thursday [18 March] an emergency session of the parliament will consider the possibility to put the Armenian atomic power plant back into operation. As is known, the power plant was shut down after the December 1988 earthquake due to a resolution by the USSR government.

The presidential press service reports that the deputies are to discuss the issue of annulling the parliament's resolution dated April 17, 1991 which stipulates that any problem related to the Armenian atomic power plant should be solved by means of a referendum. The circles close to the President do not rule out the possibility that Ter-Petrosyan will speak at the session explaining his position with respect to the atomic station. Earlier the Armenian President spoke in favor of putting the station back into operation this year taking into account the fuel and energy crisis in the republic (the power plant met the energy requirements of Armenia and Transcaucasia before it was shut down). The officials close to the President also noted Ter-Petrosyan's readiness to resort to a referendum to finally solve this problem if the parliament fails to do this.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: The local experts find it difficult to forecast the results of tomorrow's debates. It must be remembered that the representatives of the most numerous faction of the Armenian nation-wide movement (52 people) always render unconditional support to the President in the 247-strong parliament. According to the experts, the President can also rely on representatives of moderate-centrist groupings in the parliament (more than 50 deputies). The factions of the leading opposition parties, the Liberal-democratic party and Dashnaktsutyun, have 18 votes each. The Agrarian-democratic party enjoys 14 votes in the parliament. 21 deputies joined the Communist Party of Armenia registered some days ago.

According to the presidential press service, the same day Armenia's official delegation headed by Levon Ter-Petrosyan will leave for Bishkek to participate in the Armenian-Kyrgyz summit. A bilateral treaty on friendship and cooperation is expected to be signed in Bishkek; in addition, the parties will conclude an agreement on trade-economic cooperation (Armenia and Kyrgyzstan established diplomatic relations in October, 1992 - Interfax).

Motives Behind Reports of Oil Strike Seen

MK1703140493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 3

[Armen Khanbabyan report: "Oil and Gas Apparently Found in Armenia, But Government Doubts It"]

[Text] Yesterday the newspaper YERKIR [as transliterated], the publication of the opposition Dashnaktsutyun party's central committee, published a report saying that considerable oil and gas reserves have been discovered in Armenia, namely 60 million tonnes of oil and 3 trillion cubic meters of gas. The newspaper cites U.S. experts, members of a minerals and power industry department commission from California, who have been prospecting in Armenia.

The availability of energy resources in such amounts could sharply change the geopolitical and strategic situation in the region since, if it proves to be true, from being an oil-importing country that is constantly under an energy blockade, Armenia could immediately emerge as a gas and oil exporter and resolve its own energy problems for many decades to come, thus providing a strong impetus for the revitalization of Armenia's economy. In fact, Armenia could well become another Kuwait.

The government, however, has reacted to this report with more than a little restraint. According to Vladimir Manoyan, Council of Ministers press secretary, it is at the very least premature to talk about actual oil and gas

deposits in Armenia. The republic's subsoil has not been studied sufficiently and no conclusions can be made until after major geological and prospecting work has been conducted.

According to Manoyan, certain political forces are interested in information being reported about large oil and gas reserves, and it therefore has a tendentious and tactical purpose. These forces do not want the republic's economic situation to improve and to this end are trying by any means to impede the government's efforts directed today at reopening the Armenian nuclear power station, shut down in 1988.

Reports of 'Armenian Battalion' in Georgia Viewed

LD1803044093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1333 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS corresondent Aleksandr Krasulin]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—The Armenian Government is carefully studying reports which have appeared in the press alleging that an Armenian battalion has been formed in Abkhazia and is fighting against Georgia. Not infrequently reports arise which are aimed more at creating a sensation than reflecting reality. This was stated in a conversation with an ITAR-TASS correspondent by Feliks Mamikoyan, the Armenian Government's representative in Russia.

At the same time, he noted that Armenia has already given an official reaction to that report. Rusik Ter-Gukasyan, leader of the Armenian National Movement (ANM) which was victorious in the 1990 elections, stated that the ANM was opposed to the participation of Armenians in this interethnic conflict. In his opinion, Armenians should direct their efforts toward a political resolution of the conflict and play the role of peacemaker. [passage omitted]

Mamikoyan said: "It would be incorrect for every incident connected with the actions of any individual Armenian to be raised to the status of Armenian state policy or connected with the stance of the whole Armenian people."

Feliks Mamikoyan noted that if the report about the Armenian battalion was correct, then this would clearly reflect negatively on Armenian-Georgian relations. "It cannot be ruled out that some forces in Georgia wish to play the anti-Armenian card because of their political aspirations. But contacts between the leaderships of Georgia and Armenia reflect mutual trust, and this allows the hiccups which occur in bilateral relations from time to time to be resolved."

Azerbaijan

Foreign Minister Gasymov Departs for Geneva Talks

NC1703183193 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Tofik Gasymov has left for Geneva to take part in the talks on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute within the CSCE framework. Gasymov's departure was disclosed to a KHABER SERVICE NEWS AGENCY correspondent by the Foreign Ministry's Press Service.

The Geneva talks are the continuation of the talks held in Rome, where an agreement was reached to dispatch international observers to the disputed zone. Their status was also considered.

Armenian-Azerbaijani Hostilities Updated

Karabakh Forces Launch Counteroffensive

OW1803120793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1130 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Having rebuffed all of the Azerbaijani troops' attempts to assume the initiative in the Mardakert direction, the Karabakh self-defense forces launched a counter-offensive south of the regional center of Mardakert. The self-defense forces' headquarters, located in Stepanakert, report that during the counter-offensive, two more villages—Gyulatag and Dzhanyatag—were liberated. Both sides sustained human and material losses.

According to the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry, fierce fighting continues in the north of Nagorno-Karabakh to rebuff the Armenian offensive. One Armenian armored personnel carrier and one self- propelled artillery vehicle were destroyed. The same source reports that fighting continues near the villages of Dzhanyatag and Gyulatag. No information has arrived about the surrender of these villages, says the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry.

On Wednesday [17 March] evening, after a long interval, Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, was shelled again from Agdam in Azerbaijani territory, the headquarters of the Karabakh self-defense forces report. The Armenians' return fire made the Azerbaijani army stop the shelling attack.

Armenians Take Tonashen Village

LD1703094993 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0900 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Another settlement has been liberated in Nagorno- Karabakh. Armenian self-defense forces of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic have taken the village of Tonashen from the enemy and have occupied the heights

around the village of Madagiz. All the settlements liberated earlier are being controlled by Armenian subdetachments. Trench fighting has been going on in the northern part of the Lachin humanitarian corridor in the past 24 hours.

Iranian Plane Violates Airspace 15 Mar

NC1703051293 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] An Iranian aircraft violated our Republic's airspace over Makhmudiye in Fizulinskiy Rayon at 1550 yesterday. The Ministry of National Security Administration of Border Guards has informed an AZERTAC correspondent that the incident was the second in several months. Three Iranian military aircraft violated Azerbaijan's airspace over [placename indistinct] in Beynaganskiy Rayon some time ago. The latest incident is being investigated.

Georgia

State Council Appeals to International Bodies Over Russia

LD1803102093 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0700 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Report from Tbilisi by IPRINDA agency correspondent Zurab Dvali]

[Text] Good morning. Late yesterday evening, after heated discussions, the parliament of the Republic of Georgia compiled the text of an official appeal to the United Nations, the European Parliament, the Russian Supreme Soviet, and the parliaments of foreign countries. It says, in particular, that the recent events show that Russia is expanding an undeclared war against sovereign Georgia. Russian warships and aircraft systematically shell the city of Sukhumi and nearby areas.

The number of casualties is rising perceptibly. At the same time the appeal points out that up to the present time the Georgian leadership has refrained from giving an official assessment of the aggressive actions of the Russian side in Georgia in an attempt to retain good-neighborly relations with that country. The Georgian-Russian talks that are being held in Moscow are the best confirmation of this fact.

The appeal stresses that the Georgian parliament believes that the time has come to call a spade a spade, and states that Russia is carrying out military actions against the Republic of Georgia with the aim of seizing and annexing Abkhazia, a integral part of its [Georgia's] territory.

In connection with this the parliament of the republic appeals to the international community to take urgent measures to bring pressure to bear on the aggressive actions of the Russian Federation, so as to avoid a flagrant breach of international norms of mutual relations between two sovereign countries. It expresses the hope that the democratic forces of foreign states and the democratic community will not permit the revival of the evil empire, as that would be a threat not only to the fate of former republics of the Soviet Union and the Russian people themselves, but would also be fraught with indefinite consequences for the whole world.

Yesterday Eduard Shevardnadze, the head of the Georgian state, sent a letter to Russia's President Boris Yeltsin expressing hope that the Russian side will show prudence. Shevardnadze offered to meet the Russian leader or his representative at a time convenient for him to discuss ways out of the impasse that has developed.

According to information at this time there has been no reply as yet from the Russian president.

Now to the actual situation in the conflict zone. According to a report from the headquarters of the Georgian forces, the night and the early morning hours in Sukhumi were relatively peaceful.

Further on Shevardnadze Activities in Sukhumi

Tours Areas Bombed 'by Russian Aircraft'

LD1703224493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2150 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS stringer Nugzar Kereselidze]

[Text] Sukhumi, 18 Mar [Moscow Time]—While in Sukhumi on 17 March, Eduard Shevardnadze, head of the Republic of Georgia, had an early-morning meeting with leaders of the republic's Armed Forces stationed in Abkhazia and conferred with them for a lengthy period.

Eduard Shevardnadze visited a residential area bombed "by Russian aircraft," as people here claim, and talked to citizens who had suffered. In the evening, the Georgian leader met members of Abkhazia's Council of National Unity. During the conversation with them, on the subject of Russo-Georgian relations, he noted, specifically, that a way out of the crisis might be facilitated by a possible personal meeting with Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin.

Late in the evening, Eduard Shevardnadze gave an interview to correspondents from "Radio Liberty" and THE GUARDIAN, and to a Latvian journalist.

During the night, he again met Georgia's military leadership. The meeting was attended by Tengiz Kitovani, Georgia's defense minister; Dzhaba Ioseliani, deputy chairman of Georgia's Defense Council; and also Nodar Natadze, chairman of a parliamentary commission of the republic.

Warns Russian Forces Against Offensive

OW1803123293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1130 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze said the command of the Russian unit at the military laboratory in Nizhnaya Eshera "is going too far." He addressed the public in Sukhumi on Wednesday [17 March]. "If the unit does not stop to back Abkhaz separatists and poses the threat of a new offensive against Sukhumi, we do not guarantee the security of Russian forces in Georgia," Shevardnadze said.

Shevardnadze on Aid to War Victims

AU1803112493 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0800 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Undated decree issued by President Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of the Georgian Parliament]

[Text] On Measures To Help The Victims Who Have Been Left Homeless as a Result of the Bombing of the Peaceful Population of the City of Sukhumi.

As has been pointed out many times, the bombing of the peaceful population of the city of Sukhumi by Russian Air Force planes has had the most serious results. During the last three months, 1,000 persons have died, more than 1,000 have been wounded, and more than 800 residential houses have been destroyed or seriously damaged. During the last few days, we have directly witnessed on more than one occasion the barbaric acts as a result of which innocent people, children, women, old people, Georgians, Russians, Abkhaz, and Armenians have been killed or maimed.

(?I am taking into account) the statement by Batoni [Georgian polite form of address] Tamaz Nadareishvili, chairman of the Abkhaz Council of Minister, that a Government commission is being formed to help the families of the dead and to care for the sick and provide shelter for those who have been left homeless.

With the aim of helping, organizing, and coordinating aid for the victims and their families, I entrust Batoni Zurab Kervalishvili, vice premier of the Republic of Georgia Cabinet of Ministers, with creating a special working group and efficiently resolving all questions that [words indistinct] (?meetings) of the Abkhaz Council of Ministers.

Batoni Zurab Kervalishvili is to (?report) on the progress of the implementation of this assignment every 10 days.

[signed] Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of the Georgian Parliament-head of state.

Gudauta Commander Snubs Shevardnadze

LD1703211293 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By correspondent Nana Nongadze; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] For the third day now, Sukhumi has been living under continuous shelling. In the early hours of this morning, ground- attack aircraft with Russian identification markings continued bombing the town, using the so-called podsvetka [spotlights]. Over 100 blocks of apartments were destroyed. There are numerous fatalities among the civilian population.

I have always been cautious, not using the term Russian-Georgian conflict, even though the participation in this war of citizens and regular units of Russia has been for all to see, Eduard Shevardnadze—who is now in Sukhumi—stated. However, after the events of the past night, I am forced to say that we are virtually dealing with a conflict between Russia and Georgia. With the support of the group of Russian troops in the Caucasus, Eduard Shevardnadze invited the commander of the troop unit deployed in Gudauta for a meeting. However, there was no reply from that quarter.

In order to avoid a possible incident, the Georgian side again insists on Russian units stationed on the territory of the Eshera Seismic Laboratory being withdrawn from the frontline. [Video shows people walking around in rubble of houses. Shevardnadze in fatigues consoling crying woman. Georgian soldiers with guns.]

Russians Said Seeking Pretext for Deploying Subunits

LD1803112493 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0830 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Radio Tbilisi: The statement by the Russian military command on observation of a 500-meter zone around Russia's military facilities is successfully being used in the Abkhazian war. The approaches to the well known Eshera laboratory have been turned into a bridgehead for the emplacement of the adversary's military equipment.

In observing the agreement on the above mentioned zone, the Georgian side is in fact not willing to knock out the firing positions, so as not to give grounds for official interference in the conflict by Russian military formations.

It has been learned from reliable sources that the Abkhazian leadership of the Russian troops have set themselves the goal of arranging a provocation which will provide an opportunity for the involvement of special purpose subunits—the code name for one of them is Tapir and, as already reported, it is participating in military actions on the side of the Abkhazians.

Sigua on Russian Minister's 'Provocation'

OW1703150093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1432 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Georgian Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua described as a provocation Russian Defense Minister's statement to the effect that if a single Georgian missile hits the laboratory in the village of Lower Esheri, massive fire will be opened at the Georgian positions. He told the leaders of the diplomatic missions in Tbilisi that Georgia had asked Moscow several times to withdraw Russian formations, located on the frontline in Abkhazian.

Sigua expressed hope that the world community would not stay indifferent to Russia's interference in the internal affairs of sovereign Georgia.

Head of State, Ministries 'Confined to Barracks'

LD1703233893 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1527 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] In accordance with the state of military mobilization announced by Eduard Shevardnadze, the Georgian head of state, ministries, departments, and the law enforcement bodies of the republic have been confined to barracks.

Mobilization points and defense headquarters have been set up in the rayons and rayon centers of Georgia so that detachments of reservists can be sent to Sukhumi.

Military Hostilities in Abkhazia Continue

Georgians Control Gumista

AU1803095393 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0800 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] News from Abkhazia: Here is a recording that we received this morning from Sukhumi. We spoke with Soso Margishvili, head of the press center of the Main Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces in Sukhumi.

[Begin Margishvili recording] Early on 17 March, mopping-up operations of the remaining small enemy groups continued on the left bank of the Gumista River. At around midday, these operations were virtually completed.

During the day, Russian military planes appeared several times again above Sukhumi, but they did not bomb the city this time.

At approximately 1300 [1000 GMT], an enemy boat approached Sukhumi's Shukura rayon from the sea. Georgian Armed Forces opened fire upon it, causing it considerable damage as a result of which it sunk while retreating.

At approximately midday, the enemy tried to bomb Sukhumi. They fired several artillery shells in the direction of the city. However, their firing points were immediately suppressed.

During the evening, the enemy began an intensive concentration of heavy equipment and manpower in the approaches to Kvemo Eshera. Later, the enemy's activity was noticed and Georgian Armed Forces were placed on full combat alert. At the same time, fairly intensive positional battles were taking place along individual stretches of the front line. The enemy were using machine guns, grenades, and mortars. Georgian soldiers returned fire.

From 0300 at night, the enemy went on the offensive several times and tried to cross the Gumista. However, their attempt ended in complete failure this time. They were not only unable to cross the Gumista, but were also unsuccessful in approaching the river bank. They were prevented by our artillery fire as a result of which they suffered big losses; they again lost dozens of fighters and were forced to abandon the offensive.

It is relatively quiet this morning, although individual battles are continuing nevertheless. In general, the situation is stable. Georgian Armed Forces are completely in control of the situation, both at the Gumista River and various stretches along the frontline.

[Reporter] Have you heard anything from Ochamchire?

[Margishvili] Nothing of consequence is taking place in Ochamchire; it is quiet. There are only minor positional battles going on. [end recording]

Abkhaz Bid To Cross Gumista River Fails

LD1803[illegible] Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0610 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nugzar Kereselidze]

[Text] Sukhumi, 18 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Overnight the Abkhaz formations went over to attack several times, trying to cross the Gumista River, but their attacks ended in complete failure, says the press center of the Georgian troops deployed in Abkhazia. According to the press center, an Abkhaz vessel approached the coastline in the vicinity of the beacon in Sukhumi at 1300 yesterday. The Georgian Armed Forces opened fire on the vessel and sank it. At the same time, intensive positional fighting took place along various sections of the front.

Abkhaz 'Disinformation' Alleged

LD1703184993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1805 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS freelance correspondent Nugzar Kereselidze]

[Text] Sukhumi, 17 Mar—The press center of the the Armed Forces of the Republic of Georgia stationed in

Abkhazia has denied reports in the press today that armed formations of Abkhazians have crossed the river Gumista, broken through the defense line of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Georgia, and rushed into the town of Sukhumi, on the streets of which battles are allegedly being waged. According to the report from the press center, this is "routine disinformation and lies on the part of the Abkhazian side." In fact, not a single opposition armed fighter has been able to enter Sukhumi. "The Armed Forces of the Republic of Georgia, which have destroyed the forces of the opposition that went over to the attack, completely restored the frontline along the river Gumista on 16-17 March."

Russian Air Force Attacks

LD1703173393 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1804 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] [No dateline as received] In an interview given this morning to a CONTACT NEWS AGENCY correspondent, Tamaz Nadareishvili, chairman of the Council of Ministers of Abkhazia, declared that the situation on the line of confrontation of the sides remains extremely tense. Throughout the night, the enemy was firing at Sukhumi from land, air, and sea. Heavy battles also took place on the front line by the Gumista River. Hardware, artillery, and Grad installations were used in the battles. Russian Air Force planes were carrying out combat flights above the city all through the night. Several 500-kg bombs were dropped which, fortunately, did not explode. There are numerous casualties .

A great number of buildings have been destroyed. Besides, six military vessels also carried out an attack from the sea. During battles, individual Abkhazian subunits managed to get across to the opposite bank. At the moment, intense battles are taking place on the frontline. By 1500 hours, the Georgian armed formations managed to repel the enemy's assault on the frontline of the Gumista River. An attempted paratrooper landing was liquidated. One of the five naval vessels was sunk. Active combat actions have stopped by this hour. Additional forces of the Georgian Army have arrived. The enemy has suffered serious manpower losses.

By 1630, nearly the whole defensive line had been restored. The Georgian armed formations have managed to retreive the lost positions. The liquidation of small groups of enemies is under way on the frontline.

Nadarishvili Denies Gudauta Offensive

LD1703221293 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Report on interview with T. Nadarishvili, chairman of Abkhaz Council of Ministers, by correspondent N.Kandiashvili from Georgia; date and place not given; from the "Vesti" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Kandiashvili] Sukhumi has been under fire for the fourth day running now. It was bombarded by Sy-25 ground-attack aircraft. An offensive by Gudauta forces is under way. In spite of this, there were repeated conflicting reports in the media on the current events here. What can you say on the subject?

[Nadarishvili] Once again, I can say with full responsibility that they do not correspond to the facts. It is quiet in the town, there are no military actions or street fighting here. There was an attempt by an Abkhazian unit to go on the offensive and to take the town by storm, but it failed because it was smashed. [end recording]

Russian Commander Forbids Troop Movement

LD1703200893 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Excerpts] It seems Russian-Georgian relations have reached the point when a military conflict might develop into something more serious. [passage omitted]

Fedor Reut, commander of the group of Russian troops in the Transcaucasus, issued an order under which movement of Russian troops and Russian military equipment was prohibited on the whole territory of the Republic of Georgia.

In the evening, our special correspondent Sergey Shatunov returned from the permanent representation of the Republic of Georgia in Moscow. To his question of whether there was any proof of the participation of the Russian troops in the military actions in Abkhazia, he was told—yes, they had information to that effect but, unfortunately, not a single fact was produced.

Here are today's sad results. According to the information of the press center of the Georgian Defense Ministry, not less than 300 people were killed and injured among the Abkhazians; the losses of the Georgian troops were—35 killed and more than 60 wounded.

We learned today that Andrey Solovyov, an ITAR-TASS photo correspondent, has been wounded by fire-arms in the area of Gudauta. He was in Abkhazia on a business trip. He is 39 years old. He is in the hospital now and will be sent to Moscow. It is not the first case in which journalists were wounded in the conflict zone. More and more often one has to pay the highest price for objective information.

Russians Deny Knowledge of Shelling

OW1703170493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1430 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The headquarters of the Russian frontier forces has no information about shelling of Russian sites and attacks against the Russian frontier guards which are

staying in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict zone and, in particular, in Sukhumi. This information was reported to INTERFAX on Wednesday [17 March] in the press bureau of the headquarters. At present there are several posts of the Sukhumi frontier detachment in the zone of hostilities and the detachment's department is situated in the city itself.

The press bureau declared that the Russian frontier guards in Georgia had received an order to observe neutrality.

ITAR-TASS 'Disinformation' Alleged

LD1803111793 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0830 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Radio Tbilisi: On 12 March in the newscasts of Russia's "Novosti" and "Vesti" television programs, reports were broadcast by their correspondent Khazhig, an Abkhazian by nationality, on the situation in Abkhazia. In particular, the reports dealt with how the Georgian side allegedly was the first to shell Abkhazian positions. This was essentially just another piece of disinformation by the Russian ITAR-TASS news agency, drawn up in Sochi, which Khashig read word for word. It is true that how he was able to do this when he was in Abkhazia remains a mystery, but not such an unsolvable one.

It was also reported in this piece of news that subunits of Russia's Armed Forces on the territory of Abkhazia are preserving neutrality. Well now, let such a definition of the aggression by Russian troops in Abkhazia be on the conscience of the ITAR-TASS journalist and the Abkhazian stooges.

Sukhumi Civilians Flee as Fighting Continues

LD1803113893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1034 GMT 18 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[Text] Moscow, 18 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—There has been extremely fierce fighting in the suburbs of Sukhumi for more than 24 hours, according to a report from the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet press service which was faxed to ITAR-TASS today. Both sides in the Georgian- Abkhaz conflict are sustaining manpower losses. According to the same report, there is panic among the residents. Civilians are leaving the city.

According to the press service, localized exchanges of fire continued in Ochamchirskiy rayon today. This morning five Su-25 aircraft operated by Georgian Government forces bombed and strafed Abkhaz positions. There were no casualties.

New Law Says Mercenaries To Be Imprisoned or Executed

LD1703194093 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The Georgian Parliament adopted a law on mercenaries today. From now on, criminal proceedings will be instituted against those mercenaries who are taking part in military conflicts in Georgia. They will be improsoned for 10 to 15 years or executed, depending on their crimes.

Paper Reports on Latest Round of Talks With Russia

PM1503135193 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Mar 93 p 1

[Report by Petr Karapetyan and Vasiliy Fatigarov: " 'Tomorrow Terms Will Be Even Worse'; Eduard Shevardnadze has Called for Russian-Georgian Treaty To Be Signed Very Soon"]

[Text] While the latest round of Russian-Georgian talks is taking place in Moscow, in Georgia all political forces are discussing whether or not to sign the treaty with the Russian Federation.

"Only a few months ago," Eduard Shevardnadze said, "we could have signed a treaty with Russia on terms far more favorable to us than now. If we are dilatory today tomorrow these terms could be even worse."

Voicing his attitude toward the draft treaty, Shevardnadze noted that the package of agreements makes it possible to observe the balance of interests of Russia and Georgia and that he does not see anything unacceptable to the country in it.

On 11 March the Georgian newspapers published the text of the draft treaty. A referendum which would determine whether or not such a treaty should be concluded is not ruled out either. But it should be noted that the "intransigents" in the Georgian parliament believe the possible signing of a package of military agreements to be "a betrayal of Georgia's interests." They, and above all Irakliy Tsereteli, chairman of the national independence party, have called for the withdrawal of Russian troops to be accelerated.

It is true the military have a different viewpoint. Thus, Major General Panteleymon Giorgadze, commander of the Georgian border troops, has announced that by the middle of 1993 some 5 percent of Russian border guards will leave Georgia and by December a further 15 percent. The last Russian border guard will leave the country by the end of 1994 but the republic itself so far cannot ensure the safety of its own borders.

And how are matters at the talks themselves? We were told at the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry that

there are no radical advances at the talks. Normal work is under way. The next question of the military package on the procedure for allowing Russian military units and freight to pass across Georgian territory is now being agreed. Next is the question of military pensioners.

Circassian Leader Criticizes Reservists Call-Up

LD1703220093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1203 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The general mobilization of reservists in Georgia, which is expected in connection with the aggravation of the situation in Abkhazia, is described as "wrong and extremely dangerous" in a telegram that Yuriy Kalmykov, the president of the World Circassian Association, sent today to the Georgian State Council Chairman Eduard Shevardnadze.

The Executive Committee of the World Circassian Association states that if this measure is implemented, the association "will be forced to appeal to the entire Circassian [Adygeyan] people, including the 5-million strong diaspora, to rise in defense of the fraternal Abkhazian people for salvation from genocide."

"We have not done this till now because we were setting our hopes on political means of resolving the problem," the telegram says. "We believe that even now all ways of resolving the conflict by peaceful means are not exhausted. One thing is indisputable: Violent methods in this situation are absolutely useless."

Estonia

Luik: Kozyrev Remark Meant for Russian Audience

OW1803122793 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1135 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Juri Luik, the Estonian minister responsible for talks with Russia, believes that the statement of the Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev in Kaliningrad on Russia keeping impressive military presence in the Baltic was meant primarily for his audience at home. In an interview for HOMMIKULEHT published on Thursday [18 March] he also draws attention to another aspect of the speech. Russia does not rule out the possibility that in the future it will have to face a threat in the Baltic, therefore it wants to retain its presence.

However, in any case such a play of muscles complicates Russia's relations with the Baltic states that have always regarded their eastern neighbor with suspicion, the minister believes.

He also said that such a statement is meant to probe how far Russian can go in its policy.

"In fact the Russian Federation feels absolutely lonely. Not a single country supports its policy in the Baltics. It is a great victory for us that such declarations from Russia find respond [as received] in the modern world" Juri Luik said.

Entrepreneurs Urge 'Harder Stand' on Russia Talks

WS1803114093 Tallinn BNS in English 0749 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 17, BNS—The Estonian government needs to take a harder stand, including the interruption of Russian- Estonian talks, in order to gain control of military and weapons in Estonian territory, says the Party of Estonian Entrepreneurs.

Members of the group told the newspaper Paevaleht that if the next round of Estonian-Russian talks in Nakhabino do not produce a compressed schedule for the Russian troops' withdrawal, Estonia should simply halt the talks until the complete withdrawal of the Russian armed forces.

The party encouraged the Estonian State Assembly to make a unilateral decision on the terms regulating the Russian troops' presence in Estonia and to draft its own schedule for withdrawal.

Estonian authorities should also draft a schedule requiring civilians and servicemen who keep weapons outside military units to surrender their guns. After an established grace period, the individuals who keep weapons illegally should be exiled within 24 hours.

In the Estonian parliament, the right-wing centrist Party of Estonian Entrepreneurs is represented by one deputy, party leader Tiit Made.

Baltic Council Session Deemed 'Success'

OW1803011993 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1842 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonian officials regard the Baltic Council session that ended Wednesday [17 March] as a success. Trivimi Velliste said in an interview for Estonian radio that for the first time in the history of Estonian diplomacy his country's representative had chaired such an important international meeting.

He expressed the hope that the young Estonian diplomacy would succeed in this task. Estonia, he said, intends to emphasize tackling relevant problems such as economic cooperation between the countries of the region, development of the infrastructure, projects such as Via Baltika, and improvement of the telephone communication system.

Estonia will work for its own good, too. This applies, above all, to the Paldiski base of the Russian navy where the nuclear reactors must be dismantled under the supervision of a Baltic Council working group, the minister thinks.

In a Baltfax interview Vello Saatpalu, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the State Assembly said that Estonia was elected to chair the Council by consensus. "This is a goodwill gesture on the part of Russia. This decision could not be made without the consent of President Boris Yeltsin and the Russian Foreign Ministry."

Foreign Minister Meets With Danish Counterpart

OW1803014393 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1843 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Trivimi Velliste, Foreign Minister of Estonia, met in Helsinki his Danish counterpart Niels Helveg Petersen Wednesday [17 March]. The two ministers had attended a Baltic Council Meeting.

The Estonian Foreign Ministry's press service reports that they discussed withdrawal of Russian troops from Estonia, security for shipping in the Baltic Sea, and the Russian proposal that a post of human rights and national minority rights commissar be established in the Council.

The two sides agreed that this proposal could be studied under the condition that, in contrast to Moscow's wishes, his duties and scope would not be confined to Latvia and Estonia.

Dismantling of Paldiski Reactors To Cost $1.5 Million

WS1803083093 Tallinn BNS in English 1937 GMT 10 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, 10 March 1993, BNS—The dismantling of two nuclear reactors at an ex-Soviet submariners' training base in Paldiski will cost about 1.5 million U.S. dollars, a Russian expert said at a meeting at the Estonian Environment Ministry,.

Vyacheslav Perovskiy, chief expert in a Russian team working on the project for dismantling the reactors and restoring the polluted areas, said that the intended capacity of the projecting work is 150 man-years, and of the actual work on the reactors, 300 man-years.

Although the Russian government has allocated money for the projecting work, the project still lacks actual covering.

The so-called Paldiski commission with the Estonian ministry assessed the plan as viable and characterized a preliminary draft provided by the Russian team as most realistic.

The commission analyzed two alternative options for dismantling of the reactors. The first scheme says the polluted objects would be taken out from Paldiski, leaving only the reactor building and the surrounding infrastructure that can be used for industrial purposes. The second scheme foresees the building of a so-called "sarcophagus", similar to what was built in Chernobyl, around the reactors.

Although the second scheme is easier to implement and would take less time, the meeting advised to use the first option, which also requires major repairs on the railway branch to Pladiski.

Under either option, about 600 kg of nuclear fuel must be first transported to Russia.

There are two training nuclear reactors at the submarine crews training centre in Paldiski some 35 km west of Tallinn. Russia in December gave up plans to again use the reactors and declared that its experts had made it technically impossible to restart the reactors. The Estonian commission said it is necessary to check the claim over.

Parliament Passes Law on Sustenance Benefits

OW1803123493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1135 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [17 March] the Estonian parliament passed a law on sustenance benefits regulating the payment of pensions to the retired, the handicapped and families that have lost their bread-winner as well as the general or people's pension.

Persons who have worked in Estonia for at least 15 years are entitled to a retirement pension. Till January 1, 1994 the retirement age will be 60 years for men and 55 for women. After that it will grow by six months every year till 2003 when it reaches 65 years for men and 60 for women. The basic old age pension will amount to 85

of the minimal wage. Depending on seniority it can be higher. There will also be special benefits to the victims of purges, POWs, inmates of prison camps and members of wartime working battalions.

In an interview for BF [BALTFAX] the head of the parliamentary social security committee Siiri Oviir said the law is provisional. As the pension fund grows, legislation will be altered.

Latvia

Government Introduces Visa Regulations

OW1803124893 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1136 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On March 18, the Latvian government has adopted a resolution introducing visa regulations in Latvia. According to this document, beginning on March 22, when the visa regulations will be officially enacted on the territory of the republic, until April 18, Latvian border guards have been instructed to treat "leniently" the persons entering Latvia without entry visas.

This implies that persons who come to the Latvian border without a visa will not be detained and sent back. They will only get a stamp in their passports, as a special warning that they are only authorized to stay on the territory of the republic until May 1 and will have to apply for an entry visa on their future visits to Latvia.

A spokes person for the Latvian government, Mintauts Ducmanis, told Baltfax that the government had to make these concessions since Latvia's diplomatic and consular offices are not ready to issue visas. He also indicated that the Latvian authorities have not created conditions for the persons detained at Latvia's border railroad stations to wait for return trains.

In compliance with the directive issued by the Department of Migration and Citizenship of the Latvian republic, the citizens of the CIS states, including the Russian Federation, as well as Azerbaijan and Georgia, will not be allowed to apply for entry visas at the border. They will only be able to receive entry visas in the consular offices of the Latvian Republic.

At present, Latvia's only diplomatic mission on the territory of the CIS countries is its embassy in Moscow. In order to apply for an entry visa, the citizens of the above states will need to present an invitation of a person who permanently resides in Latvia or of a legal entity registered in the Latvian Republic.

UN Envoy Comments on Human Rights Talks

LD1703222593 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1000 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Excerpt] A news conference was held today at the Latvian Foreign Ministry. Sandra Kalniete, head of the Latvian Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, presented information about the results of the session of the UN Committee on Human Rights.

Our correspondent Jevgenijs Pelss spoke with Sandra Kalniete.

[Begin recording] [Pelss] Our newspapers have made a general assessment that the work of the Latvian delegation has yielded results. Please tell us what you regard as the most important and positive result?

[Kalniete] The fact that we achieved agreement with Russia. Latvia and Estonia also siplayed the ability to collaborate in an almost deadlocked situation; but as the talks proceeded, their [word indistinct] found a solution, which at present is very highly valued, and that has already formed the image of Baltic diplomacy—that the Baltics are mature, that one can cooperate with the Baltics. I think that is an extremely positive assessment. As for practical achievements, well, first of all we avoided having resolutions passed on human rights questions in the Human Rights Commission, because you know how people think. There's no smoke without fire. Therefore, we struggled in a principled way against this document.

Second, there are formulations in this document which, in a covert form [words indistinct] the process of decolonization, that is, the relocation of masses of people, or relocated inhabitants. I think that this term will be used in future years in the development of the United Nations, and here the Latvian delegation stands before something very major and by no means easy. [passage omitted] [end recording]

'Fatherland' Group Urges Repatriating Latvians

OW1703141093 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1152 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Latvian national association Tevzeme (Fatherland) declared that its representatives will do everything they can in order to compel foreigners from Latvia, as in the framework of the future Sejm, so outside of Sejm. [sentence as received]

This organization believes that Sejm should adopt a decree to guarantee the Latvian people's survival on their own land and to repatriate the occupants.

Simultaneously Tevzeme called on all Latvians and their descendants, who consider themselves Latvians and are capable to confirm their belonging to the Latvian nation with documents, to return to their homeland.

The association Tevzeme (its second name is the Latvian National Front) is a right-wing national-patriotic organization. Tevzeme, together with Movement for Latvia's National Independence and other right-wing organizations, make up the pre-election coalition Tevzeme un Brivibai (for Fatherland and Freedom).

National Economic Revival Forms New Coalition

WS1803073193 Tallinn BNS in English 1047 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Riga, Mar 17, BNS—Yet another Latvian coalition threw its hat into the ring for the upcoming Sejm election.

The Latvian Conciliation - National Economic Revival, inaugurated in Riga, unites parts of seven parties including Latvia's Support Foundation headed by former foreign minister Janis Jurkans.

Other parties participating in the coalition are the Central Alliance of Latvia's Employers, the Union for Latvia's Youth Progress, the Latvian Farmers' Union, the Latvian Fishermen's Union, and the Economists League. Activists from the Latvian Democratic Party of Labor will also take part in the group citing problems with the policies pursued by chairman Bojars. They argue that the policies are characterized by excessive national radicalism.

Five of the 6-member coordinating committee represent various parliamentary factions. The coalition has adopted the motto: "Everyone shall have the right to work honestly, make a profit, live in safe environment and preserve one's dignity in one's homeland."

Speaker of Latvia's Support Foundation Alekseijs Grigorjevs told BNS that the distinctive feature of the coalition's election platform will be its pragmatism, special attention to the needs of national economy, consolidation of Latvian society without dividing it into Lettish nationals and non-nationals, citizens and non- citizens.

The coalition also intends to focus on the concept of the republic's foreign policy. Grigorjevs argues that it should not be characterized by a double standard with respect the East and the West.

The coalition plans to nominate candidates for the Sejm during the elections in June.

Latvia has two other election coalitions: the national radical Tevzemei un Brivibai (For Fatherland and Freedom) and Latvijas Cels, which also includes Anatolijs Gorbunovs, incumbent chairman of the Latvian parliament.

'Concord for Latvia' Forms Election Coalition

WS1803121093 Riga LETA in English 1411 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Riga, March 17 (LETA)—Latvian support Foundation, Employers Central Association, Latvian Youth

Progress Union, Latvian Union of Agriculturalists, Union of Fishermen and League of Economists have created an election coalition "Saskana Latvijai - Atdzimsana Tautsaimniecibai" ("Concord for Latvia - Rebirth of Economy"). The coalition unites organizations and separate politicians which aim at the rebirth of Latvian economy and well- being of people on the basis of political and ethnic concord. The representatives of "Concord" said they were ready to undertake responsibility for it.

"Life has proved that time of rallies has come to an end. People are tired to live in need on the verge of poverty and in dissatisfaction the verge of hatred. It should be achieved that everybody could work honestly, be well-off, live in security and without humiliation in their own country," the coalition statement said.

The election coalition "Concord" has established a coordination council including such well-known personalities as Janis Aboltins, Vilnis Bresis, Vladlens Dozorcevs, Janis Jurkans, Mavriks Vulfsons, etc.

Parliament Decides To Increase Budget Deficit

OW1803123393 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1135 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [17 March] the Latvian parliament decided to increase the budget deficit by 175 million Latvian rubles. Earlier the budget deficit was set at 2.6 billion rubles. The decision was made after spending on several programs was increased. Final voting on the draft budget will take place next week.

New International Telecommunication Code Introduced

WS1803121593 Riga LETA in English 1411 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Riga, March 17 (LETA)—21 companies from 18 countries of the world have already introduced into practice a new international code of Latvia - 371, which had been given to the republic by the International Union of Telecommunications.

The countries which have not introduced into practice Latvia's new code can still use another code - 469 - through Stockholm's Communication Centre. However, there is one more Latvia's code - 7013, with the help of which the international of Latvia's telephone subscribers through Moscow is being carried out.

Goods Exchange Agreement Signed With Azerbaijan

LD1803001293 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 2100 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Representatives of the governments of Azerbaijan and Latvia have signed an agreement on cooperation, whereby the Azerbaijani side will provide Latvia with petroleum products in exchange for food products, the Azerbaijani government press service reports. Responsibility for implementing the treaty will rest with the Latvian Ministry of Trade and the Azerbaijani state petroleum company.

Lithuania

Talks With Russia Continue on Troop Withdrawal

OW1703133993 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1151 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Leader of Lithuania's state delegation for talks with Russia, ex-vice chairman of the Lithuanian parliament, Ceslovas Stankevicius, said on Lithuanian TV on Wednesday [17 March] morning that the delegation continued its work. He said, for instance, that the two parties had coordinated the draft law on the transit through Lithuania of the Russian troops currently withdrawn from Germany. He also said that this agreement was ready for signing.

However, he complained that many discussions were held bypassing the official state delegation. This plays into Russia's hands, he said, because it can choose partners suiting it best. Whatever Russia offers, ministries and departments hastily begin talks with it and can reach agreement on things which will not benefit Lithuania.

Stankevicius also said that a new state delegation is being shaped with the main emphasis laid on conducting talks on Russian-Lithuanian trade and economic cooperation.

Stankevicius Expresses 'Concern'

WS1803114593 Tallinn BNS in English 0749 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 17, BNS—Ceslovas Stankevicius, leader of the Lithuanian delegation for negotiations with Russia, expressed concern about uncoordinated contacts between the state structures of Lithuania and Russia.

Stankevicius told Lithuanian radio that "a number of talks are now held going round the state delegation" and this damages Lithuania's interests. According to him, "Russia's suggestions to no matter who—a ministry or a department—are gladly accepted and agreements on number of issues can be achieved, which would be useful to Russia, but not to Lithuania".

Leader of the Lithuanian delegation spoke sharply about statements of the state leadership about intentions to make changes in the composition of the delegation.

Stankevicius said such statements are "damage to Lithuania" as, according to him the other side starts waiting for a situation, more advantageous to it.

Stankevicius also expressed concern that trade-economic aims prevail when forming a new delegation for negotiations with Russia. The experience, accumulated during the two years of negotiations, may be lost and "coordination of political and legal positions may vanish completely", he said.

Russian Reply to Compensation for Servicemen

LD1703221493 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] The Lithuanian foreign minister has received a reply from the ambassador of the Russian Federation in Lithuania to the note of 12 February this year which requested an explanation of the law of the Russian Federation on additional guarantees and compensations for servicemen serving on the territories of the Transcaucasian, Baltic, and Tajik republics and who are discharging the tasks of defending the constitutional rights of citizens during the state of emergency and armed conflicts.

The reply note states that in accordance with this law, additional guarantees and compensations are envisaged to the servicemen temporarily stationed on the above-mentioned territories. The functions of the military [illegible] deployed in the Baltic states do not include [illegible] of the constitutional rights of Lithuanian citizens, even [illegible] of armed conflicts in the Baltic states create a complex moral and psychological atmosphere. Therefore, the Baltic states are mentioned together with Transcaucasia and Tajikistan.

At the same time, the Supreme Council and the Government of the Russian Federation are aware of the difference between the situation in the Baltic region, Transcaucasia, and Tajikistan.

Agriculture Minister Meets Russian Ambassador

LD1703230493 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Today, Agriculture Minister Rimantas Karazija received Nikolay Obertyshev, ambassador extraordinary and plenipontiary of Russia in Lithuania. This was the first visit by the ambassador in the Ministry of Agriculture.

They discussed the development of agricultural trade relations between Lithuania and Russia, the barter of agricultural products to Russia in exchange for fertilizer, machinery, and oil products.

If we do not maintain relations with the closest neighbors, we will suffocate, Rimantas Karazija said after the meeting. At present, we are interested in obtaining corn seed. We discussed this with the Russian ambassador. We dwelled on the issue of mutual debts. Russia has not paid Lithuania for food products supplied in 1989. We agreed to meet in the future and discuss practical proposals and possibilities.

Soviet General Offers To Lead Army

WS1803114693 Tallinn BNS in English 0749 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 17, BNS—A Soviet reserve general offered his services Tuesday [16 March] to lead the Lithuanian army.

Steponas Nekrosius, who led the civil defense in "Soviet Lithuania" when the country struggled for the international recognition of its independence, sharply criticized the status of Lithuania's defense system. The general said he would be interested in leading the army through its problems.

In a press conference Tuesday, the general said he was inspired by "willingness to help Lithuania." He said he hoped that his thoughts will draw the attention of "the government, as well".

Despite certain hints that recently appeared in some publications, Nekrosius said he does not claim any post and "no one suggested anything" to him. However, toward the end of the press conference, the general said that "maybe" he wants to become "a commander-in-chief of the army."

Nekrosius stressed that Lithuania does not have its military doctrine. He also pointed out that the country does not purchase the weapons that it needs, but accepts everything that is "shoved" to it. In addition, the structures of the defense system are not defined and financial means are wasted in this system, he said.

Lithuanian Defense Ministry officials at the press conference denied part of the general's remarks.

The reasons of Nekrosius' appearance in public remain unclear. However, according to some reports, Nekrosius is drawn in for consultations by the parliament's National Security Committee.

LDLP Officials Discuss Opposition Positions

LD1803050793 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Relations between the positions of the Seimas and the opposition—this was the topic of a news conference today organized by Justinas Karosas, chairman of the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party [LDLP] faction in the Seimas; acting LDLP Chairman Gediminas Kirkilas; and Seimas representatives Linas Linkevicius and Virmantas Velikonis.

According to Justinas Karosas, there is an opposition which can be divided into militant and peaceful camps. The Homeland Union [Tevynes Santara] opposition is the militant one, whereas the peaceful opposition is made up of the Social Democrats, center parties, and in some cases representatives of the Polish faction. There are differences of opinion in the LDLP faction but views coincide on fundamental issues. It is difficult to find a common language with the militant opposition, he said.

Gediminas Kirkilas noted that the LDLP's stance in the Supreme Council is different from that of the majority in the Supreme Council, where LDLP proposals often used to be rejected even without discussing them and more than one of its representatives had been called an enemy of the press. The right-wing opposition in the Seimas is attempting to politicize social and economic difficulties, he said.

Replying to a question about candidates for the post of party chairman, Gediminas Kirkilas said that seven or eight names are being mentioned.

Report on President's Visit to Denmark

LD1803121593 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 0800 GMT 18 Mar 93

[Text] Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas paid a working visit to Denmark yesterday. This is the first official visit paid by the head of our country to a foreign country after the presidential inauguration.

President Algirdas Brazauskas was received in Denmark by Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, who holds the post of EEC president for the current half year period. The development and future of Lithuanian-Danish relations were discussed at the meeting. The president expressed his gratitude for the support given by Denmark in carrying out the process of reforms in Lithuania. The president answered the Danish prime minister's questions on the political and economic situation in Lithuania. The withdrawal of the Russian Armed Forces from Lithuania was also discussed. Opinions were exchanged during the talks on the situation in Russia and its possible political and economic effect on Lithuania, including the effect on an international scale. Algirdas Brazauskas explained Lithuania's stand on the development of relations between Lithuania and the EC in aspring together for Lithuania's associate membership of the EC. In this respect the conference which is scheduled to open in Copenhagen on 13-14 April is seen as an event of great significance. The conference, in which ministers of foreign affairs of the European states will take part, will discuss and evaluate the process of economic reforms in central eastern Europe.

On his departure Algirdas Brazauskas invited the Danish prime minister to visit Lithuania. Following the meeting with the Danish prime minister, the Lithuanian president held a news conference at the Copenhagen Press Center for Danish and foreign journalists. After that, the Lithuanian president visited the Danish National Bank where he met with Mrs. Bodil Niugna Andersen, acting chairman of the Board. The possibilities of Denmark's support for improving the development of the Lithuanian banking system under the new conditions of transition to a market economy were discussed at the meeting. Following this, Algirdas Brazauskas visited the Lithuanian Embassy in Copenhagen where he met with staff members there. After that, Algirdas Brazauskas left Copenhagen for Rejkjavik. Meetings with the leaders of Iceland is on the agenda of the visit.

The Lithuanian president is accompanied on his visit to Denmark and Iceland by Darius Cekuolis, Lithuania's ambassador to Denmark; Ramunas Bogdanas, the president's adviser; and Jonas Paslauskas, director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs State and Diplomatic Protocol Service. The Lithuanian president returns to Lithuania tomorrow.

Mazeikiai Oil Refinery Resumes Operations

OW1803013293 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1700 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Following 18 days of idling the Mazeikiai refinery in Lithuania has resumed operation Wednesday [17 March]. Vytautas Strikauskas, the refinery production manager told Baltfax that late on Tuesday the Russian Lukoil Trading concern started delivery of oil; a total of 132,000 tons are expected in this lot. This amount and the 30,000 tons in the refinery stocks will keep it in operation for about 10 days.

Strikauskas said that Lukoil owes the refinery nearly 250,000 tons which was to be supplied in February and March.

In January Lukoil and the refinery signed an agreement that Lukoil would supply six million tons of oil. The refinery managers hope that no other misunderstandings will occur and regular supplies of oil start in March.

Since the beginning of the year the refinery, operating at below 0 [number as received] percent of its capacity, has processed nearly 650,000 tons of oil from various suppliers.